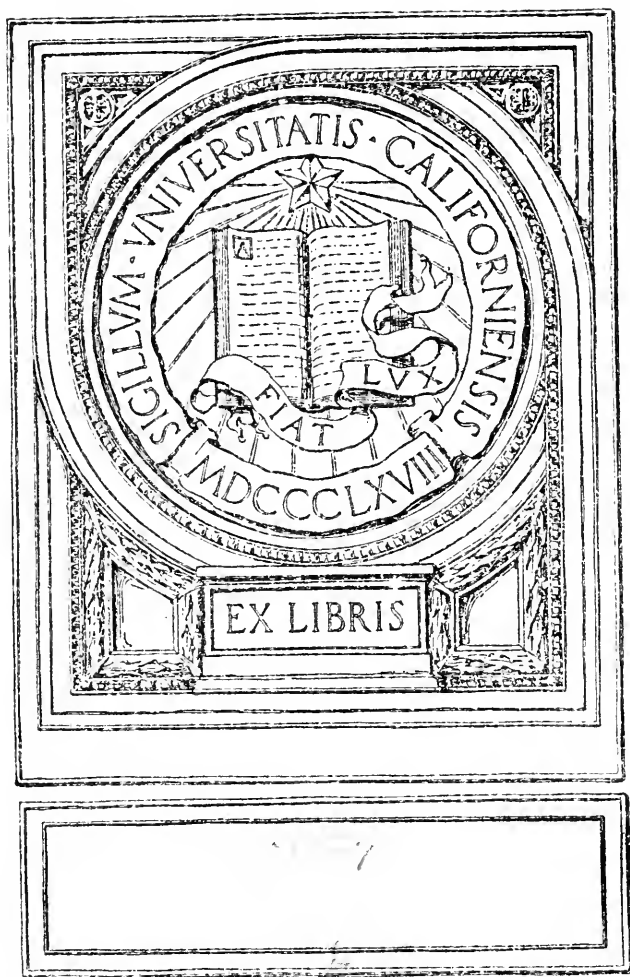


THE POEMS OF
CORINNE ROOSEVELT ROBINSON





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NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
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PREFATORY NOTE

This volume includes, with several new poems, the previous volumes by Corinne Roosevelt Robinson, "The Call of Brotherhood," "One Woman to Another," and "Service and Sacrifice."

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THE CALL OF BROTHERHOOD
AND OTHER POEMS

TO
FRANCES THEODORA PARSONS
THE FRIEND
TO WHOSE INSPIRATION AND COMPANIONSHIP
I OWE MY HAPPIEST HOURS
WITH BOOKS AND NATURE

LIFE

THE CALL OF BROTHERHOOD

HAVE you heard it, the dominant call
Of the city's great cry, and the thrall
And the throb and the pulse of its life,
And the touch and the stir of its strife,
As, amid the dread dust and the din
It wages its battle of sin?
Have you felt in the crowds of the street
The echo of mutinous feet
As they march to their final release,
As they struggle and strive without peace?
Marching why, marching where, and to what!
Oh! by all that there is, or is not,
We must march too and shoulder to shoulder.
If a frail sister slip, we must hold her,
If a brother be lost in the strain
Of the infinite pitfalls of pain,
We must love him and lift him again.
For we are the Guarded, the Shielded,
And yet we have wavered and yielded
To the sins that we could not resist.

By the right of the joys we have missed,
By the right of the deeds left undone,
By the right of our victories won,
Perchance we their burdens may bear
As brothers, with right to our share.
The baby who pulls at the breast
With its pitiful purpose to wrest
The milk that has dried in the vein,
That is sapped by life's fever and drain—
The turbulent prisoners of toil,
Whose faces are black with the soil
And scarred with the sins of the soul,
Who are paying the terrible toll
Of the way they have chosen to tread,
As they march on in truculent dread,—
And the Old, and the Weary, who fall—
Oh! let us be one with them all!
By the infinite fear of our fears,
By the passionate pain of our tears,
Let us hold out our impotent hands,
Made strong by Jehovah's commands,
The God of the militant poor,
Who are stronger than we to endure,
Let us march in the front of the van
Of the Brotherhood valiant of Man!

VISION

FRIEND of the People, purposeful and
strong,

You, who would right their wrong,
You, of the ardent eyes
That woo the glory of the further skies!
For the glad answer of a new sunrise
Must you then wait so long?

Oh! Man of Vision! though the rest be blind,
You, who do love Mankind,
You, who believe
That our fair Country shall indeed retrieve
The promise of the ages. You shall find
Your heart's reprieve.

With your own motto
"Spend and so be spent,"
Your high intent
Makes of yourself a willing instrument.

With heart and soul afire
You do aspire
But to be broken, should the cause require,
An arrow shattered ere the bow be bent!

What though the sordid sneer!
They may not hear
The cry of those
Who suffer the fierce throes
Of pain and hunger after deadly toil.
Your brothers of the soil
Follow your beacon light
Away from their dark night.

And in the end,
Though you be spent,
You, who were glad to spend,
Who would not be
A baffled Moses with the eyes to see
The far fruition of the Promised Land,
Who would not understand
How to lead captive dread Captivity,
Who would not even crave
A lost and lonely grave
By Jordan's wave?

LINCOLN

A MARTYRED Saint, he lies upon his bier,
While, with one heart, the kneeling nation
 weeps,

Until across the world the knowledge sweeps
That every sad and sacrificial tear
Waters the seed to patriot mourners dear,
That flowers in love of Country. He who reaps
The gift of martyrdom, forever keeps
His soul in love of man, and God's own fear.
Great Prototype benign of Brotherhood—
Incarnate of the One who walked the shore
Of lonely lakes in distant Galilee;
With patient purpose undismayed he stood,
Steadfast and unafraid, and calmly bore
A Nation's Cross to a new Calvary!

DEATH AND THE SCULPTOR

SUGGESTED BY DANIEL C. FRENCH'S RELIEF

MAY I not carve the message of thine eyes
That long 'neath adamantine brows is hid,
Oh! mighty Sphinx that near the Pyramid,
Beneath the glamour of Egyptian skies,
The riddle of the ages still defies?

Youth is my master—Dauntless Youth would bid
Me find the answer underneath thy lid
Where Life's solved mystery unwritten lies.
Lo! as I carve, I feel Death's ruthless hand,
And I, so young, must lay my instrument
Away with all my eager, ardent faith.
May it not be that one revealing wand
Alone can point us what the secret meant,—
Interpreter of Life—Thy name is Death!

A M F O R T A S

I AM the Sinner, purer than the sin,
I am the Doer, worthier than the deed,
I am the Loser, who was meant to win,
I, the Forswearer, yet who loved the Creed.

I, the Inheritor of Holiness,
The knighted Guardian of the mystic Grail,
Lo! I am lost in deep and dire distress,
For I have loved the best, and yet could fail.

I was the bearer of the Holy Spear
But, through my sin, the sacred Thing I bore
Turned on my breast, and what I held most dear
Has left an anguished wound for evermore.

Mine was a soul freeborn to love the light
Astir with wingèd hope and high emprise,
Self slain, and chained to dark and dreadful night,
Though doomed to deathlessness, it faints and dies.

To love the right, and yield unto the wrong,
To have the best, and know it, yet to lose;
To be the weak, though born to be the strong,
To crave the pure, and yet the loathly choose.

Perchance the tortured terror which I bear
Forever burning in my bleeding breast
Shall purge my sin and win for me a share
In the Redeemer's gift of perfect rest.

I am the Sinner, purer than the sin,
I am the Doer, worthier than the deed,
I am the Loser, who was meant to win,
I, the Forswearer, yet who loved the Creed!

FATE'S DUEL

IT comes to all of us, or soon or late,
And we must buckle close our coat of mail;
Hand may not falter, nay, nor keen eye quail
Before the destined duel with our Fate!
And some who conquer, find they abdicate
The throne which was their joy; and some who
fail
To win the battle, ardent still and pale,
Fight on,—nor will the angry Gods placate.—
But some, with visor down to hide the eyes
That looked upon a high love's shattered faith,
And some, whom Love relentlessly passed by,
Must battle without hope.—For them there lies
No eager glory in Life's sacrifice,
No victory except in loyal Death!

REMBRANDT'S POLISH RIDER

WITH careless ease, lithe, supple, lissome, free,
He sways the rein with adolescent grace,
And Youth is in the ardor of his face;
His eyes are wells of Life's expectancy,
The romance of the wonder yet to be!
What will he lose or win before his race
Is gained or lost? Shall honor or disgrace
Crown or defame his fine, fair chivalry?
Go, Rider! Fare unto the Golden West—
And though the Master, with unerring hand,
Hath fashioned that the frowning Dark Tower
stand
So sadly close—Fear not—your gallant breast
Shall never shrink before the prison wall—
No fetters could your spirit high enthrall!

M A T E R N I T Y

MY little one, thy mother's dreaming eyes
Dwell on thy nestling head against her breast
With that supreme and satisfied surprise,
Maternity achieved. The strange behest
Of Life infused and made animate,
Of soul incarnate, loosened from the spell
Of mortal matter, and sent forth elate
To wing its flight from that unfathomed cell
Whence it was born, unto the radiant sun
That ever beckons to a higher flight;
The golden goal for which the race is run,
The heavenly goal which is eternal light.
Oh! dreaming mother, dost thou recognize
The wingèd spirit in thy baby's eyes!

TO F. W.

SHE wore the crown of wife and motherhood
With noble dignity. Her limpid gaze
Could see beyond the weakness of men's ways,
And yet all human things she understood.
Not of the world, yet in it, for she would
Respond to Love's demands—or blame—or praise—
And spent herself in each succeeding day's
Fair opportunity for doing good.
Her lips had quaffed the Sacramental Wine
Of High Communion from her childhood's faith;
Her eyes had early visioned the Divine
And found in Christ the Conqueror of death.
Serene amid the clamor and the strife
She bore the lily of a blameless life!

MA BELLE

THE fine, fair cameo of her lovely face
Was like a perfect flower in tint and hue,
And from her being, breathed the nameless grace
Of sheltered woods and violets shy and blue.
She did not seem to know she was so fair;
Her tender cheek would flush with sweet surprise,
When, sometimes, we who loved her, praised her
hair
Or prized the fawn-like beauty of her eyes.
Nor could we think too much of form or line,
Or dainty coloring. The radiant soul
That from those hazel eyes was wont to shine
Seemed to be one with God, and claimed the whole
Of Angel Sisterhood. Now, one of them,
We reach toward Heaven by her garment's hem!

FRIENDSHIP

THOUGH Love be deeper, Friendship is more
wide;

Like some high plateau stretching limitless,
It may not feel the ultimate caress
Of sun-kissed peaks, remote and glorified,
But here the light, with gentler winds allied,
The broad horizon sweeps, till loneliness,
The cruel tyrant of the Soul's distress,
In such sweet company may not abide.
Friendship has vision, though dear Love be blind,
And swift and full communion in the fair
Free flights of high and sudden ecstasy,
The broad excursions where, mind knit to mind,
And heart by heart renewed, can all things dare,
Lit by the fire of perfect sympathy.

STRETCH OUT YOUR HAND

STRETCH out your hand and take the world's
wide gift

Of joy and beauty. Open wide your soul
Down to its utmost depths, and bare the whole
To Earth's prophetic dower of clouds that lift
Their clinging shadows from the sunlight's rift,—
The sapphire symphony of seas that roll
Full-breasted auguries from deep to shoal,
Borne from dim caverns on the salt spray's drift.
Open the windows of your wondering heart
To God's supreme creation; make it yours,
And give to other hearts your ample store;
For when the whole of you is but a part
Of joyous beauty such as e'er endures,
Only by giving can you gain the more!

A SONG OF THE BY-WAYS

I

I SING to the joy of the By-Ways,
The road that is grass overgrown,
That leads from the dust of the high-ways
To the meadow that never is mown;
The subtle seduction of places
Where Silence her magic has wrought,
And the Dream, or the Vision, effaces
The thralldom of thought.

II

The hour we wantonly wasted,
How rich in its passing, how fleet!
The fruit that we should not have tasted,
How perilous transient and sweet!
The dim and unfathomed recesses
Where flushes the bud of desire,
The swift, half acknowledged caresses,
The moth and the fire!

III

Then search for the flower that grows not
Except where the pathway is blind,
And the breath of the blossom that blows not
Where its beauty is easy to find;
The thrill of its scent aromatic
No gardens of ease ever give,—
Where Life is fulfilment ecstatic,
And to love is to live!

IV

For the Heart is the Lord of the By-Ways
And bids us forever to climb
To the distant and delicate shy-ways
Where even the Conqueror, Time,
Must pause on his march for a minute,
To yield us the consummate right
For the sake of the bliss that is in it
To our Dream of Delight.

MY COMRADE

I

ON a day when Youth was winging
Lo! I heard a comrade singing—
And he beckoned me and beckoned
Till I joined him on his way;
“Come,” he said, “for Time is flying—
Age is hastening, Youth is dying—
Come and we will turn September
Back into the bloom of May!”

II

Oh! I thanked my Comrade kindly,
And I followed him right blindly,
He was such a merry fellow
As he sang his roundelay;
All my happy heart I showed him
For the fairy gift I owed him,
He who taught me that September
Still could hold the joy of May!

III

So, my Comrade, I was ready
With a spirit staunch and steady,
Quick to snatch the fickle moments
Of our fleeting holiday.
How we laughed, the hours whiling,
Though we knew that no beguiling
Could do aught but cheat September
With a masquerade of May!

.

IV

Sometimes still I hear him calling,
But the autumn leaves are falling
And his voice has lost its lilting,
Luring music, blithe and gay—
And his song is faint and hollow,
For I may not rise and follow,
I who know that bleak November
Is a mockery of May!

SPRING

THE budding promise of recurrent Spring
Has filled my heart with all its primal fire,
And, like a flight of birds upon the wing,
It soars celestial with the wild desire
For all that was, when Youth and Love were
 young—
Ere Pain articulate had found a tongue.

There is a fragrance in the April air
That breathes of Resurrection; and the blue
Compelling canopy that arches fair
Above our heads, would bid us to renew
Our childhood's faith in Heaven's sapphire gate,
And once again our souls rededicate.

What if the holy fires of youth are shaken,
And burned to dust before Life's common waste,—
One touch of Spring and all our veins awaken
And crave once more the lost delights to taste;—
Undying, and reborn, dim memories stir
The old, sweet pregnancy of days that were!

THE TRAIL TO WHITE TOP

I

O H! the trail that leads to White Top in the
merry month of May,

What a galaxy of beauty we shall find upon the
way.

There the haughty hemlock's shade is

Bending o'er the quaker ladies

In the gorge as deep as Hades where the lady
slippers stray!

II

Would you climb the dappled pathway toward the
misty mountain height

You must balance on your saddle, right to left,
and left to right—

For the branches stoop and press you

As a lover would caress you,

Begging only you confess you greet their ardor
with delight.

III

There the painted trillium glances from her trinity
of leaves,
And her sister, the Wake-Robin, nods serenely
and believes
That perchance her singing brother
On some rapid flight or other
Brushed her petals with a feather where the bur-
nished crimson heaves.

IV

Near the rocks the wild azalea, flaring in an orange
flame,
Leans above the mandrake blossom, hiding
'neath her leaf in shame—
And Clintonia Umbellata
Gleams beside the laughing water
Like a monarch's royal daughter who disdains a
common name!

V

As we climb we see Elk Garden, with its broad
and grassy sweep,
And the crown of black old Balsam casting
shadows long and deep,

But we mount forever higher
Where the wind plays like a lyre,
And the sunset's sudden fire falls on summits wild
and steep.

VI

Here the delicate Spring beauty clammers up the
mountain side,
And the wind flower swaying gently, pristine as
a pallid bride,
White Top's children shyly peeping
From the undergrowth where creeping
Pine and fir their tryst are keeping, though we crush
them as we ride.

VII

Now we scale the final hillock, and before our
wondering eyes
Range on range of mountains rising from the
valley to the skies,
Far unto the dim horizon—
Peak on peak the faint flush lies on,
And the young moon's shadow dies on myriad
purple mysteries.

VIII

Oh! the trail that leads to White Top—When the
days are cold and gray,
And the winter nights are chilly, how I long to
wend my way
Back to Springtime and its glory,
There where Life's an untold story
On the trail to White Top hoary in the merry
month of May!

J U N E

THE frail felicity of April hours
Has yielded to the prescient joy of May—
And she, in turn, has laid her fragrant flowers
Upon the altar of this perfect day.
The spring with lavish hand her incense spilled,
An ardent acolyte to June fulfilled.

June in the meadow, lush with living green,
June on the hill side, soft with waving grain,
June in the rich completion of the scene,
June in the fulness of the thrush's strain—
And yet! Ah! June, must you, too, wend your
way—
Have you no potent spell Time's hand to stay?

AFTER LONG LIFE

AFTER long life if I could be bereft
Of this Earth's passion and its endless pain,
And then, if I could live my life again
As one by Death forgotten and youth left,
I wonder should I long, with all the deft
Desires of my now free, unshackled brain
To enter Life's arena? Should I gain—
No more 'twixt hope and mortal anguish cleft—
A disembodied view of soul and sense,
A swift solution of the mystery
Of Life's great pageant, and the poor pretense
Of Heaven's high-handed inconsistency?
So visioned, would I still kneel unto God,
Or yield obeisance to the soulless sod?

THE GREAT QUESTION

MY heart is weary with the world's distress,
The cry of those who struggle in the night.
Oh! Lord, who sent thy Son for our redress,
We pray thee as of old "Let there be light!"
I would not ask the "Why" nor pierce the veil;
All that I long for is to know, behind
The torture, and the terror, and the wail
Of human woe, there is no cruel, blind,
Unreasoning chance, that hurls us here and there,
Victims of an insensate tyranny;
I would not ask the cause, but this my prayer—
To know there is a cause for misery;
Could I but see the working of Thy Hand
I should be willing not to understand!

P R A Y E R

GRANT me, oh! Lord, the attitude of prayer!

My joys, my griefs, my sins, to lay them all
At Thy dear feet!—I would not prostrate fall,
But I would have my spirit always there.

From such a vantage point, could I not bear

The fierce temptations which my heart enthral,
And with Thy help so lift the heavy pall
Of anguished grief. Perchance if I could share
Each secret thought and raise it unto Thee,

Just as the dew is lifted from the flower

By the great Sun's benign compelling ray,
My faltering glance could so Thy beauty see,

Until my spirit drawn by Thy pure power

Would turn to prayer as night must turn to day.

D E A T H

I AM the Master of the Secret Road,
Silent I stand behind the half closed door.
And you, who shrink the blind, black path before,
Though driven by the inexorable goad,
You, who have paid to Life the debt you owed,
Good coin or bad, from scant or ample store,
Poor Pilgrim, furtive-footed on my shore,
May it not be that I shall lift your load?
Then, with undaunted brow, come woo my eyes
And lay in mine nor cold, nor craven hand—
May you not thrill as one with sweet surprise
Who finds a friend beloved in alien land?
Perchance my face you thus shall recognize
And all my secrets fitly understand!

HEROISM

THE TITANIC

THE LUST FOR SPEED

PROLOGUE

I AM the Juggernaut
Crushing beneath my wheel
All that is finest wrought;
Iron and wood and steel
Shatter and writhe and reel,
Yielding before my greed—
I am the Lust for Speed!

What do I care for cries,
What unto me are throes,
What do I reckon who dies—
I am the will of those,
Who from the phalanx rose,
Captains of business need—
I am the Lust for Speed!

Lo! I must make my way
O'er the vast Continent,
I must hold Time at bay,
Rush till the rails be rent
Reek from the girders bent,
Mine is the criminal deed—
I am the Lust for Speed.

And when the Ocean's toll
Reaches to hundred score,
When Death's defiant roll
Clamors for more and more
Than ever claimed before;
What though my victims plead—
I am the Lust for Speed!

I must the record break,
I must be ever first,
None shall my laurels take,
Mine is the burning thirst
Bred from the greed accursed;
Nor shall a rival lead—
I am the Lust for Speed!

ENVOI

Captains of Industry,
Pause but a single hour!
Those who so silent lie
Voice my malignant power;
This is their final dower,
Death and Despair decreed—
By the fell Lust for Speed.

PARTING

BELOVÈD, you must go—ask not to stay,—
You are a mother and your duties call,
And we, who have so long been all in all,
Must put the human side of life away.
For one brief moment let us stand and pray,
Sealed in the thought that whatsoe'er befall
We, who have known the freedom and the
thrall
Of a great love, in death shall feel its sway.—
You, who must live, because of his dear need,
You are the one to bear the harder part—
Nay, do not cling—'tis time to say good-by.
Think of me then but as a spirit freed,
Flesh of my Flesh, and Heart of my own
Heart,
The love we knew has made me strong to die!

TOGETHER

I CANNOT leave you, ask me not to go,
Love of my youth and all my older years—
We, who have met together smiles or tears,
Feeling that each did but make closer grow
The union of our hearts—Ah! say not so
That Death shall find us separate. All my fears
Are but to lose you. Life itself appears
A trifling thing—But one great truth I know,
When heart to heart has been so closely knit
That Flesh has been one Flesh and Soul one
Soul,
Life is not life if they are rent apart,
And death unsevered is more exquisite
As we, who have known much, shall read the whole
Of Life's great secret on each other's heart.

THE MEN

WOMEN and children all
First to the boat!
Quick to the crucial call
Lower—and float—
Only a swift good-by,
Meeting—ah when?
And we are left to die—
We are the men!

Ours is the better fate,
Would we then live?
They, without son or mate—
May God forgive
This untold sacrifice.
Courage! again,
Under the starlit skies—
We are the men!

Steerage and financier
Answer the roll,
Each with his duty clear,
Peace to his soul,

Though the great ocean roar
Victor—what then!
Heroes for evermore,
We are the men!

TO A. W. B.

HERE'S to you, gallant friend,
Gentle and brave,
You, who full fathom deep
Lie 'neath the wave.
You were a soldier still
Up to the last,
Doing your Captain's will
As in the past.

Not from a bullet's flight,
Not under arms,
But in the Ocean's night
Of wild alarms.
Calm in the midst of fears,
Taking command,
Courage! in spite of tears
For Fatherland.

We who have known you long,
Gallant and gay,
First in the dance and song,
Pleasure and play,
Knew, too, the valiant soul
That would stand by
(Women and children first!)—
Ready to die!

THE ENGINEER!

I

WORK, work, work,
Down in the ship's deep hold.
Was there a man would shirk?
They of the tale untold;
Down by the hot flames fanned,
Theirs was the cruel part;
They of the tireless hand,
They of the dauntless heart!

II

“Boys! we must keep her straight,
She is a gallant boat,
Worthy a better fate,
Finest of all afloat—
Now, as the Wireless Call
Sweeps the encircling sea,
Here in this prisoned wall
It's up to you and me!”

III

Work, work, work,
Water is creeping higher,
Was there a man would shirk?
Engines must have their fire.
Up on the ship's great deck
Many are careless still,
They, in the deep hold's wreck,
Work with an iron will.

IV

Knowing they have no hope
When she must list and lunge,
Never a piece of rope,
Theirs is a fettered plunge,—

Fires are out,—and cold
Rises the fluent fear,—
Here's to the tale untold,
Here's to the Engineer!

THE WIRELESS TOWER

I

THE “ambulance call of the sea”
Winging its frenzied flight—
Hark! 'tis the C Q D
Rushed through the breathless night!
“Sister Ships, do you hear?
Hurry, turn on your trail.—
Is there none that is near?
Quick or your quest will fail!”

II

Like an insistent hand,
Searching the baffling dark,
Far from the tranquil land
Travels the gallant spark.

Fingers frozen and numb,
Phillips, and pale young Bride—
“Hurry! Danger! and Come!”
Working there side by side—

III

“Sister Ships, do you hear
Carpathia, Olympic?” At last!
“Courage! have a good cheer—
Lo! we are coming fast.
Turned on our tracks are we
Sped with our utmost speed,
Over the icy sea,
Racing to meet your need!”

IV

Whose is the pallid face?
“Down we sink, by the head,
Boys! you may leave your place,
Each for himself!” he said.
Fingers frozen and numb,
Phillips, and pale young Bride—
Hist! to the dogged hum,
Working there side by side.

V

Hark! to the S O S

“Down we go, by the head—
Quick! we are in distress,

Hurry to aid,” it said.—

“Phillips! we must not stay,

Come, there is no more time.”

Yet does the Wireless play,

Beating its rhythmic rhyme,—

VI

“Down we go, by the head,”

Splutter—and dot—and dash—

Darkness! Peace to the Dead!

Silenced the dauntless flash.

THE BAND

I

THE boats are lowered, floating on the sea,
And as the men, with silent courage, stand,
Like to a battle call of minstrelsy,
A sudden volume sweeps. Oh! Gallant Band,—
Calmly, as if on terraced garden green,
The liquid music lifts to starlit skies,
As though the breathless horror of the scene
Were but a prelude unto Paradise.

II

The sweet, old hymn that every little child
Has learned to whisper at his mother's knee,
Perchance, at that dread moment, reconciled
Each doubting heart to meet Eternity.
The flute and cornet, cello, violin,
Not one was missing from the accustomed place,
And wafting sound, above the water's din,
Followed each warrior to his resting place.

III

No hope forlorn, by martial music led,
Was ever cheered by anthem more inspired;
Each hero, now amongst the deathless Dead,
Ready to meet his fate, with ardor fired,
Owed his last debt to those who, unafraid
Though face to face with Death that was to be,
With valiant hearts and hands so firmly played
Unto the end, their Requiem of the Sea!

LOVE

A W A K E N I N G

THE tender glamour of the dreamy days
Before Love's full effulgence was complete
Dwells in my soul. The dim untrodden ways
That wooed our eager yet reluctant feet;
The mute communion of our meeting eyes,
The hand's elusive touch, when still no word
With its supreme significant surprise
The pregnant passions of our beings stirred;
The shadowy dawn of unawakened pain,
Love's counterpart, with its evasive thrill,
Haunted our hearts, and like the minor strain
Of some great anthem ere the sound is still,
Mingled with all the rapture yet to be
A note of anguish in its harmony!

LOVE HAS A MYRIAD OF WINNING WAYS

LOVE has a myriad of winning ways
Beside the wells of his deep tenderness,
The frolic of his fugitive caress
As in my hair his wanton finger strays,
The lyric laughter of his witching gaze
That draws my own, reluctant, to confess
The swift response that borders on distress,
So clearly it my willing heart betrays.
Love sometimes makes a petulant pretense
Of injured dignity that he doth feign,
As though, in truth, his wayward heart did swell
With artless ardor in his own defence,—
A playful parody of poignant pain,
Created only to enhance his spell!

LOVE IS A BEGGAR

LOVE is a beggar, most importunate,
Uncalled he comes and makes his dear
demands.

He storms my heart which doth capitulate
And then he asks the homage of my hands.
He claims my eyes, and wistfully they turn,
He craves my lips, half-willingly they yield
Their soft obeisance to his own that burn
With potent passion in the power they wield.
And when, with woman's faith, I give my whole,
I wonder if dear Love doth recognize
That, with it all, unless he claim my soul,
He gives me naught and asks but sacrifice!
For Love, if Love be Love, should wish no dole,
Nor eyes, nor lips, nor heart, without the Soul!

ONE HOUR

I

SNATCHED from the greedy hand of ruthless
Time,
We saved one hour of golden afternoon.
Oh! Love, it seemed our hearts, as one, did chime
In subtle symphony; and so in tune
Our spirits were, that speech was hardly part
Of the deep language of the happy heart.

II

The sunset lingered in the misty sky,
Till dim cloud shadows in the water grew,
And lilting reed-birds from the rushes, by
The gliding stream, across our vision flew,
With low, sweet cries, as though to thrill the ear
With the close thought that Nature was so near.

III

We seemed in unison with bird and flower,
At one with all the soft and sensuous light;
I thought of Danæ in her golden shower
And felt the God had claimed me as his right—
The terrible, strong God whom men call Love,
Who rules “the Earth below, the Heavens above!”

IV

And yet, in that sweet hour, the Soul was king!
And held the heart in pure and potent sway,—
And we can ever to that memory bring
The grateful knowledge that our perfect day,
With all its essence of a mortal union,
Was touched with high and Heavenly communion.

“AMOR CONSOLATO”

WRITTEN FOR THE FIGURE CARVED BY PHILIP SMITH

THE broken lyre is lying at thy feet,
All hushed and mute the rich and vibrant
strings—

Oh! Love disconsolate, with drooping wings,
Must thou forego the music once so sweet?
Yet that deep note, forever incomplete,
Its haunting melody through memory sings,—
Lost, unfulfilled, triumphant still it rings
Once perfect chord, soon silent, full but fleet!
My broken heart lies crushed within thy hand,
Dumb as the severed lyre's harmony,
No more a magnet to thy magic wand,
It lies inert—Lean, lowlier, Love! and see
The hidden symbol by thy sad wings fanned—
Death is Love's hostage—Immortality.

UNFULFILLED

I READ the pain and pathos of your eyes,
I The aftermath of anguish in your smile,
And yet I can but envy you the while!
Your heart has bled, an ardent sacrifice
To Love's fulfilment. You have paid the price
Of keen, fierce living; nor can aught defile
The joys that once have been—they still beguile
The tear-swept memory that Time defies.
My soul's adventure, pallid, incomplete,
Has lingered in the twilight, for my heart
Has dwelt aloof in some dim atmosphere
Betwixt the Earth and Heaven. My alien feet
Have known nor Pain nor its great counterpart.
I, who have never loved, may shed no tear!

THE LESSER PART

HAD I been true to my deep loneliness,
Nor sought a lesser love to soothe my grief,
Had I been willing not to find relief,
But so to live, companioned by distress,
I, sometimes, to my inner soul confess
The fierce and inarticulate belief
That such despair forever held in fief
Could heal my spirit better than caress.
I have done nothing wrong—I only take
A human love that longed to lift my woe,
I only give a tender sympathy,
And yet—ah! yet, I sometimes long to wake
Alone, to taste again the bitter throe
Of loveless and unsolaced misery.

THE BETTER PART

I LOVED you and I lost you long ago,
And though the life within me wells in Spring
With sudden joy in every living thing,
'Tis but a fitful fever, for I know
I may not feel the glamour and the glow
That one dear presence never failed to bring;
And though my ravaged heart may sometimes
sing,
Its music cannot lose the note of woe.
So though Love plead to give surcease from pain,
I would not have it otherwise. My heart
Would lose its life with its dear loneliness.
I am of those who may not love again,
Who find the bleeding wound the better part,
And Grief assuaged, but Grief without redress.

DISILLUSION

IF I could sleep and dream that love were true,
Had e'er been true, unsullied and supreme,
I'd gladly forfeit all the bliss I knew
And all I ever could know. Blessèd dream,
Lay on my weary eyes eternal sleep,
For now they never open but to weep—

If I could count from off their bitter span
The days of disillusion I have known,
The cruel knowledge that the heart of man
Has never climbed the heights, has never grown
Through passion purified to peaks sublime,
Would I not barter all that's left of Time?

IF SOME FAIR ANGEL

IF some fair angel from the Upper World,
With silent steps and pinions softly furled,
Could lay cool hands upon these tired eyes,
Once more the scalding tears might be empearled.

Perchance, if it could feel such sweet caress
The Heart could conquer its own bitterness,
And once again, through pity and through love,
The Soul be loosened from this dark distress!

LOVE AND UNFAITH

WE, who have loved, and from our Faith have
faltered,

And made of love a desecrated thing,
How can we bear to face the God we've altered?

Like some great eagle on a broken wing,
No more our love can rise to heights transcendent

Where glows the light that ne'er on sea or shore
Has shone except for those whose love resplendent

Has lent them wings of fire on which to soar.
From that dim region which our souls inherit

We bore the promise of a pristine flame;
Alas! that we, who knew the holy Spirit,

Should clasp a lifeless ghost without a name.
How empty now the way through Heaven's portal,
Since Faith has failed and Love is not immortal!

LOVE AND FAITH

I laughed, and you echoed my laughter.
I wept, and you mirrored my tears,
But when life is over, and after
The tender enchantment of years,
Is there aught in high Heaven to discover
That our intimate joy may transcend,
For I found in the heart of a lover
The faith of a friend!

It may be the part that was spirit,
God lent as a shield for our fight,
And we who were worthy to bear it
Shall lift it aloft in our flight
To the ultimate regions of ether,
Where Faith holds the key to the throne,
And Love, kneeling proudly beneath her,
Our victory has won.

THE FORGOTTEN COUNTER- SIGN

LIFE met me on the threshold—young, divine,
And promised me unutterable things;
And Love, with fragrant greeting on his wings,
Looked in my eyes and laid his lips on mine,
And bade me quaff the magic of his wine
That deep delight, or disillusion brings.
Ah! had I kept my fair imaginings,
I had not lost the heavenly countersign;
The Shibboleth of soul supremacy;
The dower from my birth in higher spheres.
Then might I know the purer ecstasy
Of conquering Earth's test of alien tears,—
And Life, perchance, her promise might redeem,
And Love be more than a delusive dream!

THE FAILURE OF KING ARTHUR

EIGHT SONNETS

SHE SPEAKS

I

IF some fierce wind of hot and alien breath
Had swept the petals from my pure white rose.
I had been more content to watch the throes
Of such complete and devastating death,
Than to have seen it marred. For mortal faith
Accepts the wild tornado when it blows,
And, sooner than a bleeding wound disclose,
Lays on its buried hopes the final wreath.
But when the fitful gust of man's desire
Leaves on the spotless bloom of love a scar,
Barters its beauty for a transient hour
Of lesser love, that cannot claim the power
To wake within the breast a lasting fire—
Then must high Heaven mourn a fallen star!

II

Perchance I could have better borne the pain
Of knowing Love so infinitely frail,
Had it not been your hand that did disdain
To guard me from the falling of the flail.
I was secure in my sublime belief
That human passion bordered on divine.
How could I dream that you would be the thief
To rob my cup of its immortal wine?
Drained to the dregs, the empty glass I fling
Down the dim path of disillusioned years;
The Rose of Time is withered in its Spring,
The Wine of Life transfused in bitter tears,
And on my lips is left the tainted taste
Of Love once holy turned to weary waste!

HE ANSWERS

III

YOU, who have suffered much because I failed,
This bitter anguish you can never know—
To see in eyes you love the utter woe
Of one whose heart unto a cross is nailed.
Must those dear eyes forever be half veiled
As though afraid to meet the cruel blow
Of disillusion? Ah! how faint their glow—
Poor, martyred spirits by their love impaled.
Belovèd, I would give my days to this,
Could I but render back the joy you miss,
And lift the load I laid, the deep distress.
I, by whose hand your soul was rudely torn—
Is not my fate more frustrate and forlorn,
To rob the one I love of happiness?

IV

BELOVED, do you know that when you weep,
My heart weeps too in unison with tears
That water the lost joy of all our years?
Be it your will that I forever steep
My soul in this despair, I gladly reap
The pain I sowed and pay my Faith's arrears,
If I could but dispel your soul's sick fears
And for your spirit its sad vigil keep.
Teach me, my own, some ardent sacrifice
To win the gladness back to your dear eyes,
Some antidote to this eternal pain.
What would I give if I could bear a part
Of what I have inflicted on your heart,
And by my torture let you live again!

V

IN vain!—The punishment that I must bear,
The bitter price that I must always pay
Is that I cannot wash the stain away
Which I have made upon a love so fair.
I sometimes think, that, dark though the despair,
Which binds your being in relentless sway,
It does not your sad heart more fiercely slay
Than the remorse in mine beyond compare—
To give, and have the fulness of return,
To love as few have loved, and then to mar
That spotless love by a belittling scar
Which must a soul beloved forever burn.
What anguish can be greater than to know
One you would shield is bleeding from your blow?

S H E S P E A K S

VI

LOVE comes to me, and knocks at my sad heart,
And bids me let him in that he may heal
The cruel wound that will not cease to smart
Which Love himself has made. I would not steel
Myself against his dear and pleading voice,
Ah! no, with ardor would I fain forgive;
But, though I long with passion to rejoice,
And once again the old sweet rapture live,—
In vain! for naught can break the iron bars
That hold my prisoned and enfeathered soul.
And I, who once was kin unto the stars,
Who soared triumphant to Life's utmost goal,
Must dwell in wingless depths because I know
Had Love been true I could not suffer so!

VII

I KNOW you love me still, for all the blue
And ardent glances of your tender eyes
Can never feign, or you would not be you;
And yet in your high heart you do despise
The thing I did, and swift resentments rise
That I, unto myself was so untrue,
That I could stain the perfect love I knew,
That I could so defile my life's set prize!
You love me, yes, and yet you hate the sin
Against our love's convincing purity;
I mourn with you for what I might have been,
High priest of loyal Love's security—
There is no thought that crucifies your heart
But in my vain regret doth bear its part.

S H E S P E A K S O N C E M O R E

VIII

BELOVÈD, you have taught me to forgive,—
Your strong and fervent effort to redeem
Has quickened my dead heart and made it live,
And though I mourn the glory of my dream
I see that my own love was faint and frail
To meet the disillusion of your need.
I could not bear to know that you could fail,
Nor have you lean where you were wont to
lead—
But now you lead again. Your deep remorse
Has won my fainting soul to higher flight,
And all the bitter anguish and the loss
Have been the magnets to a purer light.
We, who have fallen but to rise again,
Perchance have won the victory of pain!

FRAGMENT

THE dreamy drift of honeysuckle scent,
A sensuous breath of beauty on the night—
And we who shared the intimate delight
Of Life and Love with youth and rapture blent!
For such complete communion we were meant—
To be but one in thought, and that thought right,
To love the lovely and to find the Light!

D E B T

WHAT do you owe me, Love of all my years?
Not love, ah! no, for love can not be owed.
Love must be free, accepted or bestowed,
E'en though we pay its price with bitter tears!

But this one debt you owe, that fearlessly
Your eyes shall meet the candor of my eyes;
No veiled untruth may desecrate the prize
Of a great love's untarnished memory!

TRUE LOVE IS SUCH A SWEET AND SACRED THING

TRUE love is such a sweet and sacred thing!
When I am with the One who understands,
I need not touch her lips nor clasp her hands,
Just to be near her makes my glad heart sing—
True love is such a sweet and sacred thing!

True love is such a sweet and sacred thing
That sometimes, when I cannot have a word,
I feel as though her tenderness I heard,
A full communion that the thought may bring—
True love is such a sweet and sacred thing!

True love is such a sweet and sacred thing
That often when my ardent spirit stirs
In rich and rhythmic unison with hers,
I almost hear its mystic murmuring—
True love is such a sweet and sacred thing!

True love is such a sweet and sacred thing
That all of beauty is intensified,
The world is so much fairer at her side,
So much more exquisite the bloom of Spring—
True love is such a sweet and sacred thing!

True love is such a sweet and sacred thing
That even Death might lose for me its dread,
If that dim hour could be interpreted
Through her pure soul that lifts me on its wing—
True love is such a sweet and sacred thing!

G R I E F
TO S. D. R.

GRIEF

I

THE hollow waking ere the cruel dawn
Has brought the fulness of my conscious pain,
The effort of the numb and weary brain
To know by what pale torture it is torn,
To comprehend the burden it has borne
Through fitful sleep, where ardent dreams would
fain

Dispel the horror on the spirit lain,
And by fair visions cheat a fate forlorn.
Before I fully face the day's blank grief—
This misery of waking grips my soul,
Till fiercer anguish were perchance relief
And, better than so nebulous a goal,
The surer knowledge that no glad sunrise
Unrolls a radiant world to radiant eyes.

II

TO S. D. R.

BELOVED, from the hour that you were born
I loved you with the love whose birth is pain;
And now, that I have lost you, I must mourn
With mortal anguish, born of love again;
And so I know that Love and Pain are one,
Yet not one single joy would I forego.—
The very radiance of the tropic sun
Makes the dark night but darker here below.
Mine is no coward soul to count the cost;
The coin of love with lavish hand I spend,
And though the sunlight of my life is lost
And I must walk in shadow to the end,—
I gladly press the cross against my heart—
And welcome Pain, that is Love's counterpart!

III

PERCHANCE some day when we shall see the
Whole

We may rejoice that he should thus depart,
With joy incarnate in his radiant soul
And one pure love, untarnished, in his heart;
For we, who near our life's relentless goal,
With tattered banners in our listless hands,
No more, head high, can answer to the Roll:
Our feet have slipped amid the shifting sands
Of standards lowered and illusions lost.
His is eternal dawn, no setting sun,
And we, so passion-driven—tempest-tossed—
May scarce regret his short, glad battle won.
And yet this anguished thought cannot be stilled—
So young, so loving, and so unfulfilled!

IV

TO HER

MY child in love, the beauty of your eyes
Holds in their ardent depths a poignant pain,
How many sad and sacramental sighs
Breathe through their glance and wring my heart
again.

What would I give could I your burden bear
Mingled with mine; I would not sink below
All of your grief and all of your despair,
Could I but once again transform your woe
Into the joy whose promise fair you knew,
Birthright of love which his great love fulfilled;
Passion more pure, and faith more firm and true
Earth hath not known and Heaven hath not
willed.—

And yet, perchance, could I your anguish lift
I should be robbing you of Life's best gift!

V

IMPOTENCE

TO HER

LOVE is so strong and yet so sadly weak!
When I behold the glory of your eyes
Sad with the sorrow which they may not speak—
Dim with the forfeit of their glad sunrise,
I long to hold and fashion all the years
Back to your birthright and away from tears.

II

I have had joy—Ah! would that it were yours—
I have known life and its broad vision—pain—
I have had love, the love that love allures;
If I could only give you all my gain,
There is no prize that I would set apart
Could it but help the healing of your heart.

VI
TO HIM

BLUE were thine eyes, reflections of the flower
That bids us not forget, nor dream that we
Can be forgotten by Love's mighty power.
Their lucid depths were wells of constancy.
Perchance this world had changed those ardent
eyes

That met its call with loyal, level blue—
For it may be, alas! that Life belies
The promise that it gives when Love is true.
And so, although I weep these blinding tears
That fill my cup unto the bitter brim,
I can rejoice that the corroding years
Thy clear and crystal glance shall never dim.
Are we so frail that none can stand the test,
Can Death alone be true to Love's behest?

VII

HIS gift was Joy, and surely we must keep
The gift he brought, as tribute to our love;
And we must smile, with eyes that fain would
weep

Hot tears of desolation, till we prove
That, through his sunshine, we have caught the
gleam

Of radiance from a higher sphere than ours;
Just as, of old, his presence used to seem
To bring a sweeter fragrance to the flowers,
A keener beauty to the morning sky,
A lilt of laughter to the buoyant breeze!
So we must gather close his legacy
Of Love and Joy, and then, perchance, the Peace
Which passeth understanding shall abide
In our sad hearts until the eventide.

VIII

MARCH NINETEENTH

THIS is the day I held you to my breast
For the first time, and looked into the eyes
So soon to welcome with a gay surprise
The joy of life and all its ardent zest.
For, ere its severed span was rent, the best,
The most desired and achievèd prize,
The heart's high love that only true love buys,
Had crowned your youth with its divine behest.
I try to sate my longing with the thought
That you have known the beauty and the joy
Of Life and Love, without their bitter pain;
But as the miracle of Spring is wrought,
And its new birth doth Winter's death destroy,
My heart cries out for you to come again!

IX

FEBRUARY 21ST, 1909

THIS was the day I died, when all Life's sun
Was blotted out in dark and dreadful night.
And I, who lived and laughed and loved the light,
In one brief moment knew my race was run;
Knew that the glory of my days was done,
Because no more with happy, human sight
In your dear eyes could I read love aright,
No more could feel how closely we were one,
As we had been for all the perfect years
From boyhood till you came to man's estate;
My bliss is bartered now for blinding tears.
So young to die!—And Joy with step elate
Had chosen you her own. Love unafraid
Had brushed your lips with royal accolade!

X

FEBRUARY 21ST, 1912

CAN it be true the triple years have passed
With dull and laggard steps above your head,
And yet, my Own, I cannot make you dead!
Light of my life, the glamour that you cast
Is with me still—I hold it close and fast,
And, if from Earth it has not wholly fled,
May not the sunshine which your presence shed
Break through this leaden loneliness at last?
Not that I would my bitter pain deny,
For Love is Pain and I would pay its price,
The poignant price of what was once so sweet!
The Cross that Christ Himself did sanctify
Symbolled the ardor of Love's sacrifice,
And still can lift us, kneeling at His feet!

XI

HEART OF MY HEART

Heart of my heart,
If you could come again,
And I could look once more into the blue
Clear depths of your dear eyes whose soul I knew,
Should I be free of this eternal pain,
Heart of my heart?

Heart of my heart,
If I could kiss your brow,
The broad young brow that promised virile
thought,
With lines of vital joy and ardor wrought,
Would such a kiss suffice me even now,
Heart of my heart?

Heart of my heart,
If I could hear your voice
And thrill to its clear tone with dazed delight,
Would all the world seem luminous and bright
And every living thing with me rejoice,
Heart of my heart?

Heart of my heart,
If I could touch your hand
And feel its vibrant strength enclose my own,
I sometimes think the very touch alone
Would answer all my soul could e'er demand,
Heart of my heart?

Heart of my heart,
If this could ever be,
And all my loneliness were so forgot
In your dear presence, yet I could not blot
From out my heart this mortal misery,
Heart of my heart!

Heart of my heart,
To taste the depths I've known
Is to be part of this World's utter woe.
How could I then forget the pain I know?
Pain and my heart so firmly knit have grown,
Heart of my heart!

Heart of my heart,
Not even your loved smile
Could ever wake my own to answering glee,

For, from the knowledge of Earth's agony,
No sweet reunion could my thoughts beguile,
Heart of my heart!

Heart of my heart,
My lips have drunk too deep
Of Marah's waters ever to forget.
All I can do, with eyes from anguish wet,
Is but to love and weep with those that weep,
Heart of my heart!

XII

THE GARDEN IN THE WOODS

THERE is a garden in a distant place,
In a far field where trees encircling grow,
And, often when the summer breezes blow,
I go alone to muse upon a face
That was my joy. White roses interlace
His resting spot the granite cross below.
There my dumb heart can sometimes voice its woe
And ask the healing of our dear Lord's grace.
The fragrance of the rose is as his youth,
The blue forget-me-nots reflect his eyes,
The deep dyed pansies are for memory.
In that sweet garden I can feel the truth
That all my love doth follow to the skies
And pledge the Spirit's immortality.

XIII

PAIN THE INTERPRETER

PAIN the Interpreter with level eyes
Has bound a crown of thorns upon my
brow—

And bids me wear it valiantly, nor bow
A vanquished head before joy's sacrifice.

Pain the Interpreter with searching hand
Has probed my heart to all its pregnant woe,
That I may feel the world's titanic throes,
And all the Earth pain fitly understand.

Pain the Interpreter has seared my soul
Until its flame-swept vision may discern
The utter loneliness of souls that yearn
Through some deep anguish toward a distant goal

ONE WOMAN TO ANOTHER

TO
CORINNE ROBINSON ALSOP
MY DAUGHTER, MY FRIEND
MY VALUED CRITIC

ONE WOMAN TO ANOTHER

YOU are the friend of all his early years;
He told me that the bond was strong and
close,
His comrade, his companion, even more,
For in your veins there flowed the same hot blood
That coursed in his,—your mothers, sisters,—born
In selfsame hour, linked by that close tie.
Thus were their children knit by call of flesh—
Often he told me that you never failed,
And that when others, with averted gaze,
Would have him know his own unworthiness,
Your eyes held only memories of the past
With hope for fairer future in their depths—
Loyal and loving in their tender blue,
Fit mirror for the loyal, loving heart.
Come with me, then, and stand beside him here;
How still he lies, who was in love with life!
Ah! yes, his face is sweet to look upon,

The restlessness is gone and all the lines
Are softened back once more to vanished youth,
And that strange look, so foreign to his heart,
Which came because his cruel enemy held
So fierce and firm a sway—it, too, is gone—
And so your tender kiss upon his brow
Falls on the face your childhood knew so well.
The last words that he spoke were all for you.
In fierce delirium his accents fell,
Murmuring with contentment “She will come”—
And now that you are here my bursting heart
Must pour out all its anguish, all its joy—
For joy there was, though now this bitter pain.
I was of that strange world you cannot know,
The “half-world” with its glamour and its glare,
Its sin and shame; where men, like ravening wolves,
Feed on the bodies and the souls of us
Who, either steeped in callous wickedness,
Or reckless with a dull and hopeless dread
Of cold and hunger and all bitter things,
Are willing, nay, are sometimes even glad,
To yield our outer selves for inner warmth.
And yet I shrank, for I was young,—so young—
And very simple, made for better things.
One night he came and looking in my face

He said: "You have a true and tender heart,
If you will come with me I'll shelter it,
For I am weary and athirst for love."
Thus, then, I went. At first I only knew
That I could eat until I had enough,
That I could sleep without the haunting thought
Of what the dreaded day was sure to bring;
But soon a great and mighty passion grew
O'erwhelming both my body and my soul
Because he was so very good to me—
Never a harsh or cruel word or deed,
And even when the fire filled his brain,
For me he only had the anguished look
That seemed to pray me to forgive him all.
You, who have never known the fierce, hot fumes
That rise and choke the very soul of man
And blur the tottering reason till it fall,
How can you judge of him, and how could she
Whose fair white bosom was a thought too chaste
To pillow a repentant weary head?
But I who knew the evil of the world
Could never shrink before so sad a thing;
My breast was ready for that burning brow,
My hands to clasp his hands, my lips to meet
His sad petitions that I hold him close.

And so the mother that is in us all
Joined with the love of woman unto man
And gave me strength to battle for his sake.
Only, when in his eyes I read the look
That longed for her, my swift resentment rose;
And sometimes when he stroked the soft fair coil
Of ash-gold hair that crowned my drooping head,
I almost flung the tender hand aside,
Because I knew he dreamed of other hair
That he had loved, when eyes as soft as mine
Smiled into his and pledged their marriage vow.
Then, sometimes, friends of his would come and
 speak
Of that fair world of yours, unknown to me,
And afterward he would be lost in gloom,
Or quick to let the Beast spring out and grip
His shattered being in relentless sway.
And sometimes they would whisper when they went
Saying, "Poor fellow, he will die some day
With boots on, in some cheap and drunken brawl."
Then I, who heard, did register a vow
That he I loved should never perish so.
Look at him now in fair and cleanly sheets,
The picture of his mother near his hand,
And all the darkened room as sweet and fresh

As was the memory of his mother's home;
For when he fell to-day, I heard the cry
And saw him lying, and I ran to lift
His fallen body from the cold hard stones;
With strange, undreamed of strength I bore him up
And laid him here, where, quick, with eager hands
I dragged the boots from off the weary feet
So that harsh prophecy should not come true,
While he was moaning like a little child
In wild delirium your very name.

* * * * *

And so I sent for you, and you have come,
Although too late to listen to his words,
Yet not too late to hear what I must say—
Surely, the Christ whose very name is love
Will hear me too, for long ago He said
Of that poor woman who had been like me:
“She has loved much, so much shall be forgiven.”
So now, perchance, my prayer for him I love
Will reach the far and heavenly mercy-seat
Where Christ, who waits with wide, condoning arms,
Shall welcome him because of what he did—
Because he taught me what a holy thing
Is human love, and by his gentleness
He saved my vagrant and despairing soul.

Then God, who is our Father, can but save
His erring soul by love that is divine—
What! you would kiss me? Yes, I take your kiss;
We are both women, and we both have loved!

COULD I FORGET?

COULD I forget that I have held the best
Of this Earth's treasures in my fervent grasp—
Then should I be content to sadly clasp
The wreck of beauty, and my soul might rest!

But I, who thought I knew the perfect whole,
Must still remember that lost ecstasy,
And so this lesser thing you proffer me
But sets the seal of anguish on my soul!

IF I COULD PURGE MY LOVE

IF I could purge my love and make it pure
Of all except the essence of divine;
If I could turn to crystal flood its wine
And change to peace its passion and allure,
Then, like a holy flame in paths obscure,
Lift its translucent light and make it shine
A beacon to some other soul than mine,
Perchance I might my loneliness endure.
But I am weak and woman, and my heart
Falters before the last great sacrifice,
A stumbling-block to stay my ardent will;
And thus I must accept the lesser part
And try forever just to blind my eyes
Until my craven heart is cold and still.

JUGGERNAUT

THE love that I would banish from my heart
Has nothing for me now but bitter pain,
And yet it holds me and will not depart
Nor leave my tortured soul to peace again—
And all my brooding spirit cries to God,
Just, for one single hour to turn Time's wheel,
Remit the sentence, stay the righteous rod,
And all the beauty of the past reveal.
Let me once more believe that Love was deep,
Impregnable, unbartered for desire,
And I, who sowed the wind, would gladly reap
The burning whirlwind of its flaming fire,—
But, no! the adamantine wheels roll on,
And faith, and peace, and purity are gone!

IF YOU SHOULD CEASE TO LOVE ME

IF you should cease to love me, tell me so !
I could not bear to feel your ardent hand
That waked the chords of life to understand,
Hold mine less closely; no, Belovèd, no;
If you should cease to love me, tell me so !

If you should cease to love me, do not dare
To meet me with a masque of tenderness;
I could not stoop to suffer one caress
That any other had a right to share,—
If you should cease to love me, do not dare !

If you should cease to love me, do not fear—
I would not have you think I made one claim.
If your great love should pass, there is no blame;
For love grown cold, I would not shed a tear,—
If you should cease to love me, do not fear !

If you should cease to love me, let us part,
As friends who part for all eternity;
Let us make grave and reverent obsequy
For what was once our very soul and heart—
If you should cease to love me, let us part!

But while you love me, keep our hearts' deep faith
As some High Priest would guard the holy place;
Let me not see the shame upon your face
Of one unworthy of Love's vital breath,
So while you love me, keep our hearts' high faith!

Thus, if you cease to love me, save my soul
By having kept our love so pure and high
That if the time must come when it shall die,
I may retain my treasure fair and whole,—
If you should cease to love me,—save my soul!

“AND MEN SHALL KILL THAT
WHICH THEY LOVE”

“AND men shall kill that which they love!’
Alas! that I should prove

This sorry truth!

I, in whose eager youth,

Myself did dedicate

To true love’s high estate,—

That I should bring such dread and dire fate

Upon that, which to me

Stood with the Deity!

Yours was a spirit that had never quailed,

No matter how assailed,

Yours was a heart

That would have borne the dart

Of each indignity

That had not come from me,

Nor bowed a vanquished head.

But now I see

That spirit faint and dead,
Because I failed
In fine fidelity!

I cannot make it true
That I have so killed you,
That my strong arm,
Which longed to guard you safe from every harm,
Has been the weapon that has dealt the blow
Which lays you low,—
That my weak Faith
Has done you unto Death!

I had not thought to yield
To any man my right to stand as one
Who wooed the fiercest rays of Truth's hot sun
To break upon my shield.
And yet—
After long years of such liege loyalty,
With wild regret
I pay the sad arrears
Of bartered Faith's decree.

And you—
That which I loved and killed—

Your anguish now is stilled.
You, who once knew the gleam of perfect things,
You, who were wafted high on Love's strong wings,
Now fallen to earth by sudden heaviness,—
What torture to the one who struck the blow
That he should know
That you, so silent now, feel no distress—
Dead of Love's littleness!

FORFEIT

MUST there be forfeit of such gift and grace
That we should hear this faint and feeble cry,
And see frail fingers searching helplessly
The frigid marble of the mother's face,
As though to claim a loved and lost embrace?
Is there no answer to the fierce, blank "Why?"
That springs unto our lips resentfully
Until they may not frame or prayer or praise?
Would life be fairer could we understand
The law immutable of sacrifice,
That we must lose to gain, must pay the toll
Even of death? If we could see God's hand
Perchance our forfeit were a petty price
Before the wonder that He shall unroll!

MIRIAM, “LOVED OF GOD”

MIRIAM, “Loved of God,” my little child,
I anguished so that thou mightst come to me,
And now my being bleeds as poignantly,
My mother’s heart can scarce be reconciled
That God has called thee, pure and undefiled,
Back to His presence. It would seem that He,
Miriam, “Loved of God,” had need of thee.
Yet I can still rejoice that thou hast smiled
And lived to bless me for this fleeting hour,
For in my soul has grown the wondrous power
Of perfect motherhood, the one sublime
And stainless passion of the human heart,
And though our God has willed that we should part,
I am a mother to the end of time!

FROM A MOTOR IN MAY

THE leaves of Autumn and the buds of Spring
Meet and commingle on our winding way—
And we, who glide into the heart of May,
Sense in our souls a sudden quivering.
What though the flash of blue or scarlet wing
Bid us forget the night in dawning day,
Skies of November, sullen, sad, and gray,
Once hung above this withered covering.
There is no Spring that Autumn has not known,
Nor any Autumn Spring has not divined,—
The odor of dead flowers on the wind
Shall but enrich a fairer blossoming,
And though they shiver from a breeze outblown,
The leaves of Autumn guard the buds of Spring.

SPRING ON THE MOUNTAIN

LOVE of mine, come climb the height
Far beyond the thirsty plain,
There we'll find our lost delight,
There the Spring is born again!
High above this dreamy dell
Where her first-born flowers fade
We shall see her in the spell
Of her coming. In the glade

Where the balsam branches spread
Shadows o'er the deeper blue
Of the violets we thought dead,
There the bellwort's golden hue
Rivals still the sunlight's gleam,—
Come! my heart is wild and gay
With the glory of the dream
Of a reincarnate May!

Love of mine, I cannot wait,
For our joy attends, aloof—
Let us go with hearts elate
There to put it to the proof.
What if, as we meet the Spring
Evanescent, frail and fair,
Swift, on its elusive wing,
Our lost youth should greet us there!

SONNET TO A SATYR

LINES WRITTEN FOR A FIGURE CARVED BY PHILIP
SMITH

WILD creature of the woods whose merry
hoof
Has trampled many a fine and tender blade
Amid the forest where remote, aloof,
Thou sportest in nymph-haunted sylvan glade.
Anon, with reed against thy mirthful lips,
Pan's music thou evokest, shrill and clear,
Until the flying bird, affrighted, dips
Her far spread wings that she may pause and hear
What message she may find of swift alarm
In your quick note; but soon again she sweeps
The broad horizon without thought of harm,
Seeing thee lie there while Dame Nature keeps
Her tender watch above thy graceful rest,
Holding thy form against her loving breast.

RUNNING IN THE RYE

THERE'S a boy, a little fellow,
And he's running in the rye—
Tumbled hair with tints of yellow;
All the color of the sky
Shining in the starry wonder of his deep and dreamy
eye.

How he races, as he chases
First a gleaming butterfly,
Swift to follow then a swallow—
Dipping, floating, sailing by,
Skimming o'er the brimming billows of the un-
dulating rye!

He is Spring-time, he is sing-time,
And the joy that grief has slain
Wells within me like a torrent
Till it purges me of pain—
And the passion that I bear him
Floods my heart with youth again!

BOB WHITE

I HAVE stumbled in the stubble,
I have lingered in the lane,
I have taken every trouble
Just to hear your voice again,
For I want to see you closer,
Though I'm sure that you are plain!

Now I know just how a lover
Feels about a "hot pursuit."
It was broiling in the clover,
And I could have been a brute
If I only might have found you,
But you suddenly were mute!

After singing all the morning—
Sometimes late into the night—
When I follow—without warning
Then you take to shameless flight,
For I never, never find you,
Most elusive Robert White!

You're delusive, Mr. Bobby—
That is why I like you so.
You're intrusive, that's your hobby,
Or at least you strike me so—
You're exclusive and so snobby,
All your traits are poor, I know.

Yet I stumble in the stubble,
And I linger in the lane.
Pray, why do I take such trouble
When I hear your note again?
For I know that if I found you
I should think you very plain!

JUNE ON THE MOUNTAIN

THERE'S a rhododendron thicket
Where the Laurel River flows,
Shining leaf and gleaming blossom,
Pearly white and radiant rose,
Shading deep, and ever deeper
Where the richer purple glows.

June is waning on the mountain,
And the kalmia's petals fall,
But the rhododendron thicket
Rises like a glistening wall—
Twining, blinding all our pathway
Under hemlocks straight and tall.

As the sun sinks over Round Top,
All the glittering bud and bloom
Seem to vanish in the shadow
Of the valley's sudden gloom—
Winds amid the pines primeval
Shiver with the summer's doom!

INDIAN SUMMER

FAIR fallacy of Nature whose pale skies
Would cheat us with a mockery of Spring,
As though behind them undiscovered lies
The great renewal,—Indian Summer,—bring
Back to my heart the glory that was June,
Before the withered bud, the fallen leaf.
Mirage of Autumn hours—I commune
Once more with joy's fulfilment in the brief
Sweet ecstasy that you afford the heart.
I yield in acquiescence, lulled by scent
Wafted from breezes that have played their part
In softer moments; now, alas! but lent
By Nature in a garment of disguise
To blind, with sweets foregone, my willing eyes.

A FRAGMENT

O H! quiet hour of happy vagrancy!
To float upon the river's tranquil breast,
Content to lie and watch how aimlessly
It follows its meandering, random quest
Through meadows where the noontide's drowsy
hush
Is only quickened by a sylvan thrush.

Apart, as though in some far golden dream,
I lie and muse; with indolent delight
I catch the shadows where the lilies gleam
In serried rows of yellow and of white,
And wonder that the world is so in tune—
Till I remember you are here,—and June!

BY AN OPEN WINDOW IN CHURCH

I HEAR the music of the murmuring breeze,
It mingles with the preacher's quiet word;
Dim, holy memories are waked and stirred,
I seem to touch once more my mother's knees.
Christ's human love, His spirit mysteries
Envelop me. It is as though I heard
An angel choir in the singing bird
That floats above the fair full-foliaged trees.
The old sweet Faith is singing in my breast
With peace in Nature's summer subtly blent,
All of my being breathes a deep content—
Life and its unremitting, baffled quest
Fade into this rich sense of perfect rest—
My soul, renewed, is steeped in sacrament.

MOUNT BALSAM

I STAND upon the heights beneath the blue,
Wide, sunlit spaces of a sky, cloud-torn.
Below, far ranges on my vision dawn,
Transfused in soft and amethystine hue.
I feel, perchance, as some great god would do
At the first break of an Olympian morn,
When to his primal senses freshly borne,
He caught the wonder of the world he knew.
So might Apollo thrill, when flying rein
And fiery chariot flung the day outspread;
Thus Proserpine, as all the fields of grain
Blossomed beneath her cool, creative tread;
Or Jupiter, with joy that stabbed like pain,
Looked in the eyes of Juno, newly wed!

THE METROPOLITAN TOWER FROM ORANGE MOUNTAIN

AN oval opal, shining in the mist,
Set amid battlements which, like a dream,
Some fairy palace guarding close would seem.
Shot through with azure and with amethyst,
You rise a beacon, by the breezes kissed,
Incarnate of the heights that would redeem,
Forever beckoning, wooing, as the gleam
In longing eyes that wait at some dear tryst.
Like a mirage in fever-fetid lands
Luring the traveller from the heat accursed,
You seem a magic thing not built with hands,
But moulded to allay our vision's thirst.
Above the sullen city's sordid slime
You point us upward to the far sublime!

VERA CRUZ

THEY called for the Youth of the nation,
And swift at the call,
Marines and the Middies were ready
To fight and to fall.

They dreamed of a past that was glory,
And glory to be,
Of a flag that was waving in triumph
On land and on sea.

No war! But a mother is weeping,
A father grown old—
No war! But a harvest is reaping
Of hearts that are cold.

No war! But the Country was calling
And theirs not to choose,
The North and the South had their heroes,
And so—Vera Cruz!

TO FORBES ROBERTSON, AS
HAMLET

INTERPRETER of mighty moods and men,
Creator of a Hamlet so supreme,
Shakespeare's incarnate thought is born again
To shape us Life—the substance and the dream.
And yet thy very Hamlet falsifies
His own sad words. Imperious Cæsar's clay
May stop a hole, but Cæsar's will denies
The earth, the ages, and their brief decay.
The immemorial cycles count him great,
Just as forever from the wheel of Fame,
Each revolution shall but dedicate
Another spark to thy immortal name.
“The rest is silence.”—Words may not impart
The majesty and magic of thy art.

“ABSENT THEE FROM FELICITY
AWHILE”

TO J. S. E.

“ABSENT thee from felicity awhile”—
A Your voice, sonorous, lingers on the line,
I see the tender ardor of your smile
And meet your eyes that claim the thought in
mine.

’Twould seem you answer only to the sound
Of Shakespeare’s melody, your smile and eyes
Though lit with depth of meaning, have not found
The desolation that half hidden lies
Behind the genius of the perfect word;
But I, being woman, not alone to art,
But to the world’s great loneliness am stirred,
Conscious of all the emptiness of heart
That I shall feel when you no more for me
With loyal love can make felicity!

THE POET

THE Poet should be one who sings,
Whose rhythmic music lilts and rings
With images inspired;
And he must be the Seer who sees
Beyond his utmost melodies,
Until, with soul afired,
He brings the waiting world the word
That only Seer and Singer heard!

HOSTAGE

LIFE, wilt thou wait awhile
And let me smile?
Before the stress and turmoil have begun,
Grant me one hour,
One hour of golden dalliance in the sun,
The fair, sole dower
To hold forever close against my breast,
And so forever rest
In happy knowledge that joy has been mine;
That in my veins like wine
Has run the glamour of the sunlight's glow;
That winds so soft and low
Have brought me fragrance of the distant brine,
Or honey-sweet amid the Spring-touched trees
Have swept the scent of these
Into my eager senses, till I seem
A part of my own dream,
My dream of youth
And nature's flowering,
Life, let me sing!

Wilt thou not stand aside

Until with all the fair world's gifts allied
I shall have armor of delight to bring

Against the fierce, hot sting
Of thine assault when that dread day shall come?

I promise thee, O Life, I shall be dumb,
Nor utter one reproach, if only now

I may go forth with gay uplifted brow
And meet my golden hour of happy fate—
Life, wilt thou wait?

I am no coward—when the trumpet calls,
Valiant, my feet shall climb the crumbling
walls,

My breast be bared to hail of shot and shell;
But now, while all is well,

Let me hold fast

To this sweet hour that it shall ever last,
A hostage for the future and the fight.

Thus, when the darkness comes and clash of
arms

And all my soul is sick with fierce alarms,
The healing light,

The peace of what has been,
Shall guide me through the din,

And pledge me promise of what is to be;
Thus may I see
My happy hour once more restored to me,
Transfigured, dim perchance, yet glorified
Although with Death allied!
So be it, then—if now,
Stern Life, if thou
Wilt wait a little while,
And let me smile!

THE NIGHT BEFORE

WHY should I linger in these cramping walls
And yield my being to their dull constraint?
Why should I bow before this dread disease
That creeps so slowly through my languid limbs
That it may never reach my burning heart
Before it kills the fire of my brain,
And leaves me with half-blurred, unseeing eyes?
Surely no gracious God has so decreed,
No God whose name is Love. Love could not work
For the belovèd such a dire fate—
To meet the impotence of yielding flesh,
To feel the flickering of waning sense,
And yet, to know that years unending stretch
In dim succession ere all life decay.
I am no coward—I could bear even that,
If, by my living, I could ease one pain
Of one I love, or shield a single heart
To whom I owe a crumb of fealty.
But in the watches of the long black night

I take account of each and every one,
And can but see them better for the deed
Which I do purpose ere another dawn.
They who are young can have no need of me,
For what has youth to do with such as I?
Youth with its splendid, gay inconsequence—
Its laughter in the very eyes of fate,
Its daring in the face of destiny—
Youth reaches for the glove that Life throws
 down
And, smiling, flings it back with unconcern.
I know, for I, too, picked the gauntlet up,
Although my youth was riddled through with
 age—
The premature, sad age that comes with care,
And cruel disillusion with a world
That turns a cheap, inglorious, shallow cheek
To many a valiant and resentful heart.

Why should we dread this door that we call Death—
'Tis but the other end of Life, we know—
Birth at one end, we may not understand,
Death at the other end, unfathomed too—
Why should we fear to meet it, when our day
Of use in this strange world is past and gone?

I read of one who in the Antarctic cold
Wandered apart to die, because he felt
Himself a hindrance rather than a help,
With weight of sickness and of suffering—
And all the world cried, “Gallant, selfless one!”
And yet, because I lie within four walls
I may be deemed a coward, though my heart
Has struggled long, to choose the nobler way—
I, too, am selfless, nor will courage fail—
Full armored then, I greet my comrade, Death!

LIFE, A QUESTION?

LIFE? and worth living?

Yes, with each part of us—

Hurt of us, help of us, hope of us, heart of us,

Life is worth living.

Ah! with the whole of us,

Will of us, brain of us, senses and soul of us.

Is life worth living?

Aye, with the best of us,

Heighths of us, depths of us,—

Life is the test of us!

SOLUTION

I ASKED you if you loved me as of old,
And in your eyes I read a questioning,
As though you feared your ardor had grown cold,
And Love no more were such a wondrous thing;
But even as I searched that look, my own
Reached to the vision you have never known.

And so, through all your doubt, my seeing soul
Smiled, for it knew you could not fathom love,
For none have scaled the heights nor dreamed the
whole,
Till Death's blank silence comes the test to prove—
Had I not met its echoless despair,
How could I know that your deep love was there?

But I have walked with that grim comrade, Pain,
And yearned with baffled longing for a word
That lips, once joyous, may not speak again

To happy ears that knew not what they heard—
I, who have anguished through the endless night,
Can measure all your love for me aright!

And so I know if I should pass away,
The question in your eyes would pass with me;
If I should die before another day,
Your heart would bleed for mine as poignantly
As though we had been severed in the Spring
Of our great passion's pregnant blossoming.

Death shall interpret what Life may not see,
And eyes that bless our own with love and laughter
Are only fully prized when mystery
Curtains the present from the dim hereafter.
What fruitless, fond assurance you would give,
If I were dead, and words could make me live!

A KENTUCKY GRAVE

THERE lies a lonely grave beneath tall trees
In that fair State where birds afire flash
Above the azure-purpled waves of grass.
Upon the nameless stone is but a date,
Mid-June, when all Kentucky's loveliness
Was at its full, and on a year before
The cruel war had ravaged the sweet South.
But though no word is on the barren stone,
The legend runs that one both fair and young—
Ah! passing fair and brimmed with eager youth—
Lies cold and still and nameless 'neath the sod.
For in that year the old-time hostelry,
That still stands by the mound where she is laid,
Was gay with dance, and song, and revelry,
And all the Blue Grass State had gathered there
As they were wont to do in other days.
On that warm mid-June night, all suddenly,
She stood within the hall, while her dark maid
With coal-black hands unloosed the fleecy cloak,
And every eye was drawn unto the gleam

Of jewels at her waist and round her throat
That seemed a lily, dew-dropped in the dawn.
Her strange dark eyes were flashing jewels, too,
Set in the pallor of her dreamy face
That turned to one as though his life was hers.
Now, as the rhythmic music of the dance
Fell on her ears, her eyes sought his and sank
Into their depths as one who drowning steeps
His failing memory in things best loved—
Then slowly to the soft and sensuous sound
Of flute and viol and of violin,
They floated in a circled harmony;
And in her eyes one saw the love that leaned
And lavished everything, and on her lips
An evanescent smile that came and went.
She seemed a pure white flame of loveliness!

* * * * *

The music ceased, and as the last sweet note
Wafted away to star-lit depths of June,
She sank, and swooned in sinking, to the floor
And died, without a murmur, in his arms.
They laid her on a snow-white couch, and left
Her weeping woman crouching at her feet,
And her dark lover kneeling with her hand—
Listless as lily when the dew is gone—

Clasped in his own to watch the weary night.
But when the dawn broke, lo! they found her there
In utter loneliness, for both had fled!
So runs the story—none have ever heard
More than these lines have told, and thus the stone
Bears nothing on it but the lonely date,
And all who come must listen to the tale.

* * * * *

One, learning of the legend, lays a rose
Upon the mound and leaves the gift of tears
To keep its petals fresh, because of grief
That one so young should perish ere the bud
Had fully flowered in its blossoming.
Ah, happy heart that weeps at such a fate!

But still another comes, with laggard step
And eyes opaque from disillusion's blow,
Whose lips once long ago knew laughter well,
Now parched with pallid parody of mirth
And curved with scorn that any pity one
Who never can know aught but Youth and Faith—
Ah, bitter heart that smiles at such a fate!

And we who ponder on the twice-told tale,
Shall we then laugh, or weep, or turn aside,

Perchance, and envy her? Had she not lived—
She who had loved, and danced, and dreamed, and
died,
Like some resplendent butterfly that wings
To immortality in one brief hour!

LOVE IS A TALENT

LOVE is a talent, like the gift of song
That thrills its cadenced passion on the ear,
So Love, with harmony as rich and clear
Strikes on the chord of Life, a vibrant, strong,
Full note, that turns to right the cruel wrong,
That lifts the lonely, stills the starting tear,
Heals the bruised heart and casteth out all fear
With peace that only can to Love belong.

But if the singer sing not, then the high,
Sweet resonance shall harsh and tuneless fall—
Thus Love, if only garnered and not given,
Of its own atrophy must droop and die—
The dowered of Love must lean and lavish all
Their boon on Earth, their Sesame to Heaven!

IF I WERE NOT SO YOUNG

IF I were not so young, the vistaed years
Had not for me such pale, perspective dread,
For I could turn, beneath this veil of tears,
To swift reunion with my longed-for Dead—
But Youth is mine, and all its baffled fires
Burn fiercely on within my ravaged breast,
And all its ardent, innocent desires
Defiant still their heritage attest.
My blurred, blank gaze that once was wont to
shine
With prescient glow in what fair Time should
bring,
Now scans Life's far and faint horizon line
Knowing that Death alone shall hold no sting—
My dumb despair, when it can find a tongue,
May only falter, "Were I not so young!"

LOVE'S ARREARS

I WAS in love with life and then I died—
Because I lost the thing that I loved best.
In my embittered soul with arid zest
Sad disillusion, with fierce hate allied,
Battled with murdered love and wounded pride;
And harsh resentment, harbored in my breast,
Festered the wound in my dead soul, till Rest
Even the Rest of Death could not abide.
My holier self in grief unholy lost
Struggled to win my soul from sullen shame
And lift my eyes through sacrificial tears,
But though I proudly paid the crucial cost
I wept for Love's dear sake and Love's fair fame
And died again before lost Love's arrears.

WHICH ?

WE ask that Love shall rise to the divine,
And yet we crave him very human, too;
Our hearts would drain the crimson of his wine,
Our souls despise him if he prove untrue!
Poor Love! I hardly see what you can do!
We know all human things are weak and frail,
And yet we claim that very part of you,
Then, inconsistent, blame you if you fail.
When you would soar, 'tis we who clip your wings,
Although we weep because you faint and fall.
Alas! it seems we want so many things,
That no dear love could ever grant them all!
Which shall we choose, the human, or divine,
The crystal stream, or yet the crimson wine?

IN PRISON

SHE is a murderess? Nay, it is not true—
Such eyes, such gentle eyes, such loving eyes,
And then her smile—it is so gentle, too.
You held her poor hard hands, and spoke to her
In tender tones, as mother to a child,
And she, with quick-caught breath, cried: “Anna’s
good;

So good, dear lady, always as you wish.”
And with those same adoring, pleading eyes
She seemed to drink your kind, protecting smile.
We gave her flowers, gay with Autumn sun,
That we had plucked in freedom, and the thought
Stabbed in my heart. She murmured little words,
In that soft tongue that poets love so well,
And pressed the blossoms to her patient breast.
So then we left her by her grated cell,
Hearing the prison door with dubious clang
Swing back behind us. Oh! the sunset light
Never had colors that were so divine,

Never was riotous wind so fresh and free,
And the pale moon was shining dimly, too,
As though fair nature held high carnival
Of all her beauty; lavish in her gifts
That we might know the contrast of our joy
To that poor inarticulate sister's fate.
A murderess? Then you told me—and the tale
Sent the hot blood in torrents to my head
Until my eyes were blinded with her pain.
They had been boy and girl in Italy,
Had danced and sung together by the shore,
And she was always his, had never known
Father or mother, and the priest had smiled
Because their pennies were too few to give
That he should bind them with a marriage vow!
But she was her Luigi's, he was hers—
And when his gay, adventurous spirit willed,
She followed him to this far land of ours—
“We think we find much gold, and make our home,”
She said, and then a glory swept her face.
She told of how he worked, and every day
She brought with her own hands—ah! patient
toil—
The stones with which to build the little house.
And so it grew with all the long, hard days

Till one Spring morning, lo ! the home was done.
She was so tired that her eyes were dim,
Her once straight body twisted out of shape
With heavy loads, but all her heart was glad—
Now it was done and she could rest awhile.
And then he came. Looking her in the eyes,
Laughing, he said: "This home is not for you—
You are grown old and ugly—Anna, go—
A fair young girl will share this home with me."
Dumb, like a stricken dog, she turned and went—
He was Luigi, and she must obey!
She hardly knew what happened after that,
She had not died, it is so hard to die—
Yes, she had worked and earned her daily bread—
And days went by—days pass when souls are
 dead—
Just as they pass when hearts are full of song—
And so a laggard year dragged to its close.
The Spring had come again—the gracious Spring!
When all the earth is redolent with joy—
And happiness the birthright of each heart.
Ah ! but the Spring has bitter pain for one
Who dreads its coming, fears the long sweet days
Fashioned for bursting blossoms and for love.
All suddenly she came to life again—

She, who had died that day the year before.
Her home, the little home her hands had made,
Surely it could not hurt Luigi if
She looked once more at what her toil had
wrought!

Her hurrying feet could hardly carry her,
So eager was she. In her weary brain
There was no thought of evil, only thirst,
For that sweet past consumed her like a flame.—
There was the porch, and on it was a girl,
Young as she once had been, with curling hair
Falling on cheek and breast, and in her arms
A dark-eyed baby clinging to that breast;
She leaned across the railing and she laughed—
Luigi, too, had laughed a year ago!—
And laughing, called in shrill and taunting tones:
“You are the woman that Luigi kept
Until you grew too old—you had no child
To bind his love. Look what I’ve given him.”
She laughed again; mocking, she held the babe
As though to give it into Anna’s arms—
Those arms that knew Luigi’s, and had clung
In love’s first ecstasy around his neck
In primitive passion. Now, that love, betrayed,
Called on the savage that is in us all,

Caught at her broken heart, her blazing brain—
A flash of steel, and the dread deed was done—
What wonder? Ah, the pity of it all!

Twelve years of prison, did you say, twelve years
Have passed already in that little cell?
A life-long sentence, but commuted now,
Because of good behavior? Ah! those eyes—
Such tender, quiet, sad, beseeching eyes—
Eyes of a murderess! And the man is free!

GOD'S FAIR WORLD

IN some old book I read a legend quaint
Of one who wandered from the haunts of men,
One who had sinned and suffered, turned a saint—
He never looked upon their like again.

His eyes drawn inward, shriving his sad soul
By counting over the monotonous bead,
He put away the joy of nature's whole—
Musing upon his own poor, trivial deed.

Nor would he look upon the glad sun rise
Shedding a hope reborn adown the day,
He dared not glory in the sunset skies
But ever turned his eyes within, to pray.

Year after year behind his narrow wall
In garb of monk with crucifix on breast,
His head averted from the sight of all,
He built his pathway to eternal rest.

And when his time was come, with faith assured
He met his hour with longing satisfied,
Content that God should know what he endured;
Alone as he had lived, alone he died.

Swift to the gate of Heaven, the legend ran,
His soul was wafted. Peter, at the gate,
Spake but this word, "Loved you your fellow
man?"
And led him to the throne where suppliants wait.

And there, so runs the tale, the God of Love
In majesty upon his throne empearled
Leaned to the saint and said, from heights above:
"What did you think, O man, of my fair world?"

Kneeling, the saint turned sinner, humbly prayed:
"O Lord, my selfish eyes were blind with pain;
I knew not your fair world; I was afraid—
Grant me to serve my fellow man again!"

SPRING AND GRIEF

I SEE my love in every little child
Whose eyes meet mine with laughter in their
blue;

I hear him in the note, half sweet, half wild,
When bird calls bird their promise to renew;
I feel him in the ardor of the sun
That woos the fragrance from the waking flower,
And maple buds, rose flushed by beauty, won
To swift fulfilment of the Sun God's power.
The world is young once more as he was young,
With life and love reborn in everything—
O singing hearts! My own is faint and wrung;
The rapture and the riot of the Spring
Can but enhance the throb of my despair—
I miss him most when joy is everywhere!

AUTUMN AND GRIEF

THE short dark day, the chill of sombre skies,
Are far less poignant to my brooding heart
Than Spring with all her pregnant mysteries,
And promises in which he has no part.
Autumn is kind to one whose soul must weep,
While radiant Spring with callous cruelty
Awakens every longing that would sleep,
To stir once more the joy that was to be.
Autumn! You are the healer, for in truth
You seem to say, all things must change and die.
Spring slays me with the memory of his youth,
Cheats me with happiness that passed me by—
But Autumn murmurs, with pale lips and cold,
“Death alone spares us, for we soon grow old!”

GETHSEMANE

ALONE we kneel in our Gethsemane
And blame our brother that he watcheth not!
We crave not him but drain his sympathy,
All but our own fierce grief have we forgot.
We cry, "Canst thou not watch with us one hour?"
And, yet, aloof, we bow, a thing apart.
Grief-scarred, we have nor wish, nor will, nor power
To clasp our brother to our bleeding heart.
He who was closest may not reach the soul,
Shrouded and veiled, by anguish felled and slain;
How can he watch, unfainting, when the whole
That once was his responds to naught but pain?
We blame our brother, yet it is not he,
But our dead heart that makes Gethsemane!

MOTHERHOOD

I SOMETIMES think because at first I shrank,
And in my girlish heart rebelled, that I
Should face again the long and weary months,
'Twas just for that as well as other things
That when he came I could not love enough.
But long before the day my doubt had passed,
The child had leaped within me and I knew
The sweet and holy joy of sacred things.
And so my hour came, and, fierce and long,
I battled for his life in agony,
A wheel of fire in my shattered back
And all my being crucified with pain.
Then suddenly, as though by earthquake rent,
The world went black with torture, and I knew
That my cry mingled with another's cry
So faint I hardly heard, and yet I thrilled
To know the anguish gone, because once more
A man child had been born to this strange earth.

There, as I lay, exhausted, I rejoiced
That I had known the whole, each primal pang
That any squaw might feel beneath the bush—
That I had proved myself what women were
Who brought the pioneers into the world,
The virile men who conquered wood and plain,
For I had never murmured till the last
Great wrench of nature brought my body's fruit.
Perchance because of all this poignancy,
I loved him with a love so deep and strong
As though 'twere born of elemental things;
But then, I lay within the darkened room
Content to float upon a seeming mist,
So very quiet, almost in a dream—
The calm and placid days slipped softly by,
Those days of sweet seclusion, when the world
Seemed very far away, when even love,
Except the love I bore my little one,
Was quite a thing apart, though hovering near
And guarding me from care, a loyal shield
That locked my chamber door to all but peace.
So still I lay, till he would come to me;
Then I would hold him closely to my breast
Against the sheltered haven of my heart,
And feel that God was in His Heaven high.

Sometimes I took him in my happy arms
And scanned the little face and touched the hair,
The fair soft hair, and looked into the eyes
That were my father's in their shining blue—
One of my father's race, ah! it was so—
For as he grew to childhood I could see
The very traits I loved, the joy of life,
The gay, bright heart, the sweet simplicity,
The love and courage and the fierce contempt
For one who could be cruel to the weak—
And even as he grew my passion grew,
For we were one in heart and very soul—
His spirit lifted me, and all my sky
Was filled with light if he were only near.
Life seemed so sweet for him, and so for me
With every perfect thing that it could bring.

But suddenly, the awful summons came,
For he was dead, and so my heart died too!
The pangs I suffered when I gave him birth
Were only in my weak and pliant flesh,
But when he died it was my heart was torn,
My passionate heart that seemed a living thing,
That loved with love that was affinity—
The one affinity that cannot fail.

Just as the world went black when he was born,
So blacker far it went when he was dead,
For my strong heart was shattered by the blow.
Thus, though I know that I have many joys,
And though I greet the beauty of the Spring,
And welcome Summer with its golden days,
The glory is departed from the earth
Because he is not part of this same Spring,
Because the Summer and its golden days
Can never more be seen through his dear eyes.
And though the Autumn with its rich red glow
Awakens a response within my breast,
I cannot laugh as once I laughed with him,
When riding neck and neck across the hills
Into the glory of the dying day!
Ah! no, the chill of Winter holds me fast,
For he was the fair flower of my youth.
But even with the anguish that is mine,
I could not wish that it should ever pass,
For it is but the other side of joy,
And I must meet it as I met the pangs
Of that fierce birth that brought me my delight —
The essence of the part that is divine,
The perfect joy of perfect motherhood.

AFTER

I HAVE lived and rejoiced in the living,
I have loved and accepted the pain,
I have given for joy of the giving
And counted the gift as a gain—
Like music that melts into laughter,
And laughter that trembles to tears,
I have waked every chord—but hereafter
How mute are the years!

They are dim with the fear of forgetting,
And numb with a joy that is cold,
They are wan from a sun that is setting,
And blank as a tale that is told.
No thrill in the rush of the river,
No throb in the hush of the seas,
In the wound of Grief's guarding, no quiver,
For drained are Life's lees!

FEAR

BEAST in the jungle, ready, crouched to spring;
The spawn of sorrow, and the price of pain;
Lurking in shadow, dark and evil thing,
Waiting to claim my craven heart again.

Grief slew my joy, and bore it far away,
And left me in its place this barren blight
That turns the gold of morning to the gray
And haunting terror of the murky night;

Fear that the ones I love shall anguish too,
Fear for the heart red-hot, the heart turned cold,
Fear of the grief, the blinding grief I knew,
Fear of the shortening day, the years grown old.

God of my Fathers, from thy throne above,
Lean in thy tenderness, and draw me near,—
Teach me, O gracious Lord, the perfect love,—
The perfect love that casteth out all fear!

SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

TO
THE MEMORY OF MY BROTHER
THEODORE ROOSEVELT
WHOSE WATCHWORDS WERE COURAGE AND SERVICE
WHOSE LIFE WAS A
TRUMPET CALL TO LOYALTY TO AMERICA
THIS BOOK
IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED

SAGAMORE

*At Sagamore the Chief lies low—
Above the hill in circled row
The whirring airplanes dip and fly,
A guard of honor from the sky;—
Eagles to guard the Eagle. Woe
Is on the world. The people go
With listless footstep, blind and slow;—
For one is dead—who shall not die—
At Sagamore.*

*Oh! Land he loved, at last you know
The son who served you well below,
The prophet voice, the visioned eye.
Hold him in ardent memory,
For one is gone—who shall not go—
From Sagamore!*

January 6,
1919

TO FRANCE

OCTOBER, 1916

WE, who have loved the France of old,
The France that gave us Lafayette,
Now deeper still our poignant debt,
And tenderer ten thousandfold.

Our youth has shed its blood for you,
Because your valor wrung the heart.
You, who have borne so brave a part,
You builded better than you knew.

If we of alien race and tongue
Shall face, once more, the God of War,
What you have been and what you are
Shall be the flame before us flung.—

Your gallant heart shall strengthen ours
To reach unswerving toward the goal,
Through you, perchance, a new-born soul,
Unrecognized, within us flowers.

Ah! France, who gave us Lafayette
When we were scarred as you are now,
Before your wounds we humbly bow,
And bless you for our deeper debt!

S E R V I C E

APRIL 6, 1917

I N terms of service, not of sacrifice,
We pledge our bodies for our souls' desire,
Infused with flame, heart-high with holy fire,
Yet not as martyrs would we pay the price.

Rather as lovers, asking but to give,
And giving only passion purified,—
Craving one epitaph—"Behold here died
A Freeman who would have his country live!"

AT THE TOMB OF LAFAYETTE

“LAFAYETTE, we are here!”
L Dothed helmet, bowed head
Greet you, the great Dead.
Were it weakness to shed
So impassioned a tear?
Lafayette, we are here!

We are here, Lafayette!
Though we waited so long,
We have come to right wrong,
Here are arms lithe and strong
That would pay the old debt,—
We are here, Lafayette!

Lafayette, as we kneel,
Can you hear in your grave
That our pledge is to save
Or to die—as the brave
Men of France do reveal
How to die for her weal!

Lafayette, we are here!
Vive la France! She shall live—
For her life we would give
What you gave, and retrieve
The dear debt—by your bier;—
Lafayette, we are here!

S U S P E N S E

BEFORE THE AMERICAN TROOPS GO INTO ACTION

MARCH 30, 1918

WE wait and hold our breath, for it must come,
The hour of anguish which shall strike for all:
When, like a heavy and unyielding pall,
We know what we have sensed with pulses numb.
The measured march of Sorrow strikes us dumb.—
Imprisoned by our dread, as by a wall,
Breathless we wait, and neither rise nor call,
Yet tremble at the echo of the drum.
Oh! Spring that we have loved and welcomed oft,
When bursting buds acclaimed the new-born year,
We shudder at the thought of what you bring,—
Each breeze that murmurs softer and more soft
Hurries the breaking heart, the bitter tear,—
Death, the Intruder, tramples down the Spring!

TO PEACE, WITH VICTORY

NOVEMBER 11, 1918

I COULD not welcome you, oh! longed-for peace,
Unless your coming had been heralded
By victory. The legions who have bled
Had elsewhere died in vain for our release.

But now that you come sternly, let me kneel
And pay my tribute to the myriad dead,
Who counted not the blood that they have shed
Against the goal their valor shall reveal.

Ah! what had been the shame, had all the stars
And stripes of our brave flag drooped still unfurled,
When the fair freedom of the weary world
Hung in the balance. Welcome then the scars!

Welcome the sacrifice! With lifted head
Our nation greets dear Peace as honor's right;
And ye the Brave, the Fallen in the fight,
Had ye not perished, then were honor dead!

THANKSGIVING DAY, 1917

LET us give thanks, and lift our ringing voices,
Though not for plenty, nor for paths of peace;
Let us rejoice, as a strong man rejoices
To run his race;—nor pray for swift release:
We who have doubted, dumb with indecision,
Nor turned our faltering footsteps toward the Right,
We who have heeded not the surer vision,
Let us give thanks—for we have seen the light!

Let us give thanks that once again, compelling,
Our flag shall float for Freedom to the skies,
Ten thousand times ten thousand voices swelling
Proclaim our service and our sacrifice.
Let us give thanks—an undivided nation,
One purposed now, we press toward the goal,
To Thee, our Fathers' God and our Salvation,
Let us give thanks—for we have found our Soul!

THANKSGIVING, 1918

LET us give thanks, and meet with head uplifted
The pealing bells that ring for righteous peace;
Now that the coward souls like sand are sifted,
We, who are purged, can welcome our release.

Had we not seen the light, our honor, lying
Like unsheathed sword, had lost its dauntless
edge,—

Had we not conquered death by our own dying,
We had been false to Freedom's fairest pledge.

But now we kneel, eyes lifted in thanksgiving
With peace triumphant deep within our heart,
We, who have failed nor fallen dead, nor living,
Let us give thanks, for we have borne our part!

TO GENERAL LEONARD WOOD

NOVEMBER 11, 1918

YOUR vision keen, unerring when the blind,
Who could not see, turned, groping, from the
light,

Your sentient knowledge of the wise and right
Have won to-day the freedom of mankind.
Honor to whom the honor be assigned!

Mightier in exile than the men whose might
Is of the sword alone, and not of sight,

You march beside the victor host aligned.
Had not your spirit soared, our ardent youth
Had faltered leaderless; their eager feet,
Attuned to effort for the valiant truth

Through your command, rushed, swiftly to compete
To hold on high the torch of Liberty—

Great-visioned Soul, yours is the victory!

CHRISTMAS, 1918

ONCE more with Christmas Eve comes "Peace,
Good-Will."

Once more the Christmas hope unstifled springs,
And hearts are glad because it seems that still
We hear the rustle of the Angels' wings.

As, long ago, the men who watched their sheep
Welcomed the radiant messengers of light,
So we who walked in darkness, woke to weep,—
No longer dream of slaughter in the night.

Ring out oh! bells of Peace, and let your voice
Be the new pledge of brotherhood in truth—
The valiant Dead would bid us to rejoice,
For this they gave their ardor and their youth.

That all the anguish, all the mortal pain
Shall bring new vision to a world once blind;
The booming guns, though silenced, call again
Not now to die, but live for all mankind!

TO ITALY

OCTOBER, 1918

FAIR land of dear desire,
Where Beauty like a gleam
Has waked the hidden fire
Of what our souls would dream!

Where shining ilex glistens,
And cypress' sombre shade
Above dim fountains listens
In some forgotten glade.

Oh! land of dear desire,
Thy beauty sweeps again
My heart with sudden fire
And burns away its pain.

I dream with Perugino
On some far Umbrian hill,
Or pray with sweet St. Francis
Till this world's fret is still.

Until my soul reposes
As once, unscourged he lay,
Amid the thornless roses
Until the break of day.

Dear Saint, who was the brother
Of every living thing,
Could we to one another
Thy gracious message bring,

The world renewed, awaking,
Would shed the shattered, torn,
Grim night of its own making,
And pledge a peace reborn.

Fair land of dear desire,
Thy beauty like a gleam
Shall kindle and inspire
What all our souls would dream!

IN BED

WRITTEN FOR A BENEFIT FOR THE "ENFANTS DE LA FRONTIÈRE," 1917

WHEN evening comes
And I'm in bed
And mother sits and sings
And holds my hand
And strokes my head,
I think of all the things
That I have heard—
Can they be true?—
That children just like me
Are cold and lost and hungry too
In lands across the Sea?

They say they wander in their fright
All dumb with cold and dread;
And when I think of them at night
I want to hide my head
Upon my mother's gentle arm
That holds me close and still,
And seems to promise that no harm
Can ever come, or ill.

And then I hear my mother's voice
So tender in a prayer,
"Dear God, may all the girls and boys
Who wander 'Over there'
Be brought for kindly sheltering
To those who crave to give,
And they who mourn shall learn to sing
And they who die shall live."

And when the prayer is done I sleep
So still without a sound,
And dream no little child shall weep
And all the lost are found!

SOLDIER OF PAIN

TO HER

NOT in the trenches, torn by shot and shelling,
Not on the plain,
Bombed by the foe; but calm and unrebelling,
Soldier of Pain!

Facing each day, head high with gallant laughter,
Anguish supreme;
What accolade in what divine hereafter
Shall this redeem?

Through the long night of racked, recurrent waking,
Till the long day,
Fraught with distress, brings but the same heart-
breaking
Front for the fray.

In a far land our Nation's patriots, willing,
Fought, and now lie,—
But you—as brave—a harder fate fulfilling,
Dare *not* to die!

“ D E W E Y ”

O H! the gallant first of May—
When our ships stole in the Bay,
Under cover of the darkness,
Into deep Manila Bay.
What cared they for mine or shell,
For our Dewey knew full well,
That we'd sink the Spanish vessels,
With the dawning of the day.

And amid the cannon's roar—
Bursting from Cavite's shore,
Pointing at our daring flagship,
As it neared Cavite's shore,
Clear, above the deafening gun,
From the lips of everyone,
Rose the hoarse cry of defiance,
Swelling ever more and more.

“’Tis in memory of the *Maine*,
And our gallant sailors slain,
Faraway in Cuban waters,
All our gallant sailors slain.”
Fierce and swift the deadly shot,
For the strong arms faltered not,
We were paying debts of honor,
As we made the bullets rain.

And the Stars and Stripes shall wave,
Over many a Spanish grave,
For the harbor of Manila
Now is but a Spanish grave.
And the first of May shall be
Dewey’s Day on land and sea,
Honor to our dauntless Dewey,
Honor to his seamen brave!

May 1
1898

THEODORE ROOSEVELT
A WOMAN SPEAKS TO HIS SISTER

I NEVER clasped his hand,
He never knew my name,
And yet at his command,
I followed like a flame.

I pressed amid the crowd
To touch his garment's hem,
As one of old once touched
The Man of Bethlehem.

I was of those who toil,
Whose bread is wet with tears,
A daughter of the soil,
And bent, though not with years.

His words would lift the veil
That blurred my tired eyes,
They seemed to strengthen me
To serve and sacrifice.

And all the values lost,
When life was cold and grim,
Were clear and true again
Interpreted by him.

Our leader and our friend,
He knew what we must bear,
And to the gallant end
He bade us do and dare.

Clad in an armored truth
And by high purpose shod,
He gave us back our youth,
Our country, and our God!

TO MY BROTHER

I LOVED you for your loving ways,
The ways that many did not know;
Although my heart would beat and glow
When Nations crowned you with their bays.

I loved you for the tender hand
That held my own so close and warm,
I loved you for the winning charm
That brought gay sunshine to the land.

I loved you for the heart that knew
The need of every little child;
I loved you when you turned and smiled,—
It was as though a fresh wind blew.

I loved you for your loving ways,
The look that leaped to meet my eye,
The ever-ready sympathy,
The generous ardor of your praise.

I loved you for the buoyant fun
That made perpetual holiday
For all who ever crossed your way,
The highest or the humblest one.

I loved you for the radiant zest,
The thrill and glamour that you gave
To each glad hour that we could save
And garner from Time's grim behest.

I loved you for your loving ways,—
And just because I loved them so,
And now have lost them,—thus I know
I must go softly all my days!

THE A. E. F.

To T. R.

FROM "THE STARS AND STRIPES"

GONE is the joy,—gone is the thrill of returning,
We who had longed to share with you all
our laurels,
To lay them at the feet of our great companion;—
Hushed is rejoicing!

Never again to see the light from your window,
Shining across the land that you loved and in-
spired,—
“Put out the light,” you said, and slept; but not
dreaming
The darkness for others.

You, our leader, but more, our greatest companion—
Near enough for the spur of your voice and your
hand grip,
Ever ready to share, but sharing, still leading
Upward and onward.

Listen! This is our pledge, to fare and to follow,
Follow the trail you blazed, without shadow of
turning,—
We, who have learned of you, shall not be found
wanting
Here or hereafter!

VALIANT FOR TRUTH

“And so Valiant for Truth passed over, and all the trumpets sounded
for him on the other side”

VALIANT for Truth has gone—Alas! that he has
left us,

Valiant for Truth, the leader that we love,
Where shall we find his like? Grim death, thou
has bereft us

Of that great force that lifted us above.

Valiant for Truth, thy voice rang strong, and clear,
and loudly,

We had not borne to have its accents fail;
Nor would we choose, oh! Knight, that thou shouldst
go less proudly

Ardent and young, upon the last, long trail.

What though we stumble blindly over ways that
darken,

We are not worthy if we do not fare

Forth to the West, where still thy voice calls us to
hearken—

Up to the heights, and we shall meet thee there.

.

“Valiant for Truth has come,” thus all the trumpets
sounded,

“Valiant for Truth who faltered not, nor fell;
Fearless he rode the trail, the last long trail un-
bounded,

Rode to the final goal, where all is well!”

U R I E L

II ESDRAS IV

THEN Uriel spake,—the great angel, the angel of
God—

“Would ye know then the secrets of Yaveh, the
rule of his rod?

So, weigh me the weight of the fire, the blast of the
wind

That has left in the wake of the tempest no whisper
behind;

Or call me the day that has vanished,—one hour
of the day,—

And I will interpret Jehovah, His will and His way !”

And I answered, “Oh ! Angel of Yaveh, ye know
and I know

That the questions ye ask are a riddle. The gleam
and the glow

Of the flash of the fire are fitful, and cannot be
weighed,—

And the whirl of the cyclone unmeasured can never
be stayed,
And the day that is past—could we call it—then
Heaven would be here,
But, perchance, we could walk, even blindly, were
the pathway more clear!”

Then Uriel answered, “I ask ye of things ye have
known.
Ye have sat at the warmth of the fire; the breeze
that has blown
Has cooled ye when faint with the summer’s long
sweep of the sun,
And the day that is past, ye have lived it, although
it is done.
If ye cannot discern, though half hidden, the things
ye have seen,—
Would ye look on the veiled face of Yaveh, His
might and His mien?”

And I answered God’s angel in sorrow, “’Twere
better by far
That we ne’er had been born to the bitter, blind
things that we are;

To suffer, and not to know wherefore, to be but
the sport
Of Jehovah who reads not the riddle of all He has
wrought.”

Then, gently, the angel of Yaveh made answer to
me—

“When the flame of the fire has vanished, oh ! what
do ye see,

The smoke that is left? Yea, the ashes, but fire
and flame

Are greater than smoke or than ashes. The clouds
are the same—

They pass to the earth in the shower, the drops
shall remain,

But greater than drops and unending the rush of
the rain.

What has been is but drops and but ashes to the
more still to be,

For the ways of Jehovah are wondrous. Wait,
mortal, and see !”

THE LAST LEAF IN SPRING

WHY am I here?

I, who belonged to that dread season drear,
When, wet and cold,
November rains did change to formless mould
My comrades, and did sweep
Them all to their last sleep;
But I—

I was passed by.

Even the storm that wild Autumnal night,
When winds, tornado-like, rushed by in might,
And carried my companions on their breast,—
Left me at rest.

I had been happier far with them to fly
Fiercely dissolved, against an avenging sky—
Riding Death's ride upon the sounding gale,—
Than, wan and pale,
Against this branch to cling,
And wait a new-born Spring!

I have no place
Where buds do bloom apace.
One near me now
Burst into adolescence,
How, ah! how?
Her fragrant scents
With youth's impertinence
Importune me to know why I still hold
The branch, with tendrils cold—
“Why,” they would ask of me, “have you survived?
Your brothers were short-lived
And went their way,
Why did you stay?”

And I
Can but reply,
A monk at heart,
As though apart, unshrived,
“I know not—nay—I only know
I would not have it so.”
And yet, and yet
Perchance 'tis not so sad
To see the earth once more, reborn and glad.—
I cannot feel it—not one hollow vein

Can nature's sap retain;
But I can see
The mystery of bloom, on bud and tree,
Can hear new leaves
Murmur within their shoots of days to come,
Can almost hear the hum
Of some precocious and marauding bee
Around the roots
Of flowers it may not see.—

And even I—
A skeleton indeed at such a feast,
For one brief moment
From my fate released,
Can chant my threnody—
Can lift my voice
And in the thought rejoice,
As one who, living still, though out of time,
Has heard again the rhythm and the rhyme
Of Earth's renewal. The sublime
Recurrence of the beauty of the days
Born but to praise,
When, long and sweet and slow,
The hours linger and the flowers grow.

Ah me! Ah me!
I strive to think
I am content to see,
And not to feel.—
It is not true,
I long to revel in the Heaven's blue,
I long to dance
And waver gayly in the wooing breeze
Balanced at ease,
Sure of my strength to brave its harmonies
With no mischance.
I long for mad
Sweet ecstasy, when all the world is glad—
I strain to thrill
When robins trill
The song of passion to their waiting mate;
But no, my fate
Is otherwise.
Come Wind, arise—
Blow, feigning Autumn,
Blow, as though the world
In cold November's fog and mist were furled,—
Blow fiercely—till upon the new grass hurled,

I lie, a shattered thing
That none regret.
I had no right
To that stupendous sight—
The promise and the pageant of the Spring.
And yet—! and yet—!
Hurried to Earth at last
Upon the April blast
I would not quite forget!

FLIGHT

I HAVE followed the flush of the morn
To the heart of the sun.
Aurora, the spirit of Dawn,
Ere the day has begun,
Has winnowed the way of the wind
For the beat of my wings,
Above the dim haunts of mankind
To the essence of things.

Apollo awaits me afar
With his horses in-reined,
As I float with the faint morning star
Where the ether is stained.
By the crimson that flares as he sweeps
Down the fire-touched mist,
As his chariot wavers and leaps
From the heights amethyst.

I swing in the nebulous space
Till I welcome the shroud
Of night;—and the stars in their race
Are singing aloud,
They chant of the past,—of the days
When the song of the spheres,
The rhythm of prayer and of praise
Knew no mortal ears.

Orion has thrown me his belt
As a life-line of light,
The Pleiades shimmer and melt
As a lure to my sight,—
Arcturus points up to the crown,
To the crown I have won—
I am morning and night, I have mown
My path to the sun.

Must I fall from the kingdom of air
To the bondage of earth,
Man calls me his shackles to bear,
For 'twas he gave me birth.

His vision has buoyed my flight,
Has given me grace
To conquer the dawn and the night,
And the infinite space.

Man-made, I have pierced the wide blue
Of the heavens on high,
Nor Hermes, winged God, as he flew
Were freer than I—
Man-made, as a God, lo! I dare
Olympus to span—
I am kin to the uttermost air,
Yet the daughter of Man!

FROM A MOTOR AT MIDNIGHT

O H! the strange wild thrill of a motor flight
In the still, clear cold of an Autumn night,
When led by the lure of the straight white road
The car leaps loose to the engine's goad,
And the front lamps shine down the distant track
And the small red point at the motor's back
Sends a crimson glow on the quick-left trail
Like Antares' eye in the scorpion's tail.—
How the brain responds to the pulsing throb,
And the soul replies to the wind's faint sob
As it meets the branch for a cool embrace
Of the Autumn trees in their leafless lace.
I look straight up in the wide-lit skies
And I know that the vaulted depth replies,
For it bids me join in the planets' race
While it offers the prize of a stellar place—
Till I dream that Auriga, charioteer,
Is at the wheel, and the whirling sphere

Answers my dream as I meet the stars.—
Orion's belt, with its golden bars,
Is in my grasp; and a hunting-song
Echoes the meadow road along,
Borne on the breath of the midnight breeze
Chanted by distant Pleiades.—

The hill sweeps low as we skirt the stream
Where, upside down, with a laughing gleam
The dipper flings from the milky way
A frothing spoonful of yellow spray.—
And air and water, and earth and sky
Call out "Good Speed" to us rushing by—
We are one with the spaces, and one with the dark,
Alive as the flash of electric spark,
In tune with nature, at one with man,
Who has made us part of the cosmic plan—
By the child of his brain, which he curbs and reins,
Or hurls headlong through the midnight plains—
Oh! the strange, wild thrill of a motor flight
In the still, clear cold of an Autumn night!

THE PATH THAT LEADS
NOWHERE

THERE'S a path that leads to Nowhere
In a meadow that I know,
Where an inland island rises
And the stream is still and slow;
There it wanders under willows,
And beneath the silver green
Of the birches' silent shadows
Where the early violets lean.

Other pathways lead to Somewhere,
But the one I love so well
Has no end and no beginning—
Just the beauty of the dell,
Just the wind-flowers and the lilies
Yellow-striped as adder's tongue,
Seem to satisfy my pathway
As it winds their scents among.

There I go to meet the Springtime,
When the meadow is aglow,
Marigolds amid the marshes,—
And the stream is still and slow.
There I find my fair oasis,
And with care-free feet I tread
For the pathway leads to Nowhere,
And the blue is overhead!

All the ways that lead to Somewhere
Echo with the hurrying feet
Of the Struggling and the Striving,
But the way I find so sweet
Bids me dream and bids me linger,
Joy and Beauty are its goal,—
On the path that leads to Nowhere
I have sometimes found my soul!

“IF I COULD HOLD MY GRIEF”

IF I could hold my grief in calm control,
And look its blinding terror in the face;
If I could welcome it to its own place
Deep in my heart; if I could sweep the whole
Of this fierce pain, that seems to drown my soul,
Into my being like a firm embrace,
And let it with my life's stream interlace,—
Then Grief and I, perchance, might win the Goal.
But if I shrink, with dim, averted eyes,
Craving to hurry through the restless days,
Seeking escape,—a wounded creature, blind,—
Then all my deeper self, that hidden lies,
In vain shall strive to lead me in the ways
That Grief would teach my lagging feet to find.

THE WOMAN SPEAKS

MY would-be Lover, wait—believe me, this
Perchance shall prove, of all, the fairest hour;
When I have felt your arms' compelling power,
When I have known the rapture of your kiss,
Life may not hold again such tranquil bliss—
Eternal forfeit! Friendship's perfect flower
Withers before the Sun-God's golden dower,
Will you not grant me, now, an armistice?
Let us call loyal truce that we may steep
The mind and heart and soul in this rich sense
Of full communion.—Faith, serene and deep,
Shall hold our passion to an innocence
Of spirit union— Wait,—and let Love sleep
Before the blinding harvest he shall reap.

“WE WHO HAVE LOVED”

WE who have loved, alas! may not be friends,
Too faint, or yet too fierce, the stifled fire,—
A random spark—and lo! our dead desire
Leaps into flame, as though to make amends
For chill, blank days, and with strange fury rends
The dying embers of Love’s funeral pyre.
Electric, charged anew, the living wire
A burning message through our torpor sends.
Could we but pledge, with loyal hearts and eyes,
A friendship worthy of the fair, full past,
Now mutilate, and lost beyond recall,
Then might a Phoenix from its ashes rise
Fit for a soul-flight; but we find, aghast,
Love must be nothing if not all in all!

L I F E H U R T M E

L I F E hurt me—

But I welcomed even pain—

So keen I was the full deep cup to drain,
I courted all the clamor and the strife,
The grief, the joy—I was in love with life.

Death hurt me—

But I wept and bowed my head

To learn the lesson Christ interpreted.

With dear Love's help I raised my anguished eyes
And thought I read the message of the skies.

And then Love hurt me—

And I lost the whole

Of faith and peace. "Ah!" cried my struggling
soul,

"If Love can fail its own, why live?" it said—

And lo! still-born, I found my soul was dead!

THE OLD HOUSE

THE old House on the Hill
Has harbored many a fire,—
Keen heart and young desire,—
All silent now and still!

The old House on the Hill
Behind its sheltering walls
Held Joy that Hope recalls
And Love that hearts fulfil.

The old House on the Hill
Surmounts the flying years,
Fit frame for smiles, or tears,
Strong shield for good or ill.

The old House on the Hill
Still harbors many a fire,—
New lives, but old desire—
Soon silent, too, and still!

LE GRAND DISPARU

ON the far hill, where all your people love you
Silent you lie,
'Neath the Scotch cross that rises there above you
Under the sky.

Stanch as its stone, the hand you held out gladly,
To meet the need
Of those who turned to you; who now greet sadly
What was decreed.

Deep in your heart's far innermost recesses,
You held your Own,—
Scorning all lighter loves and their caresses—
You gave alone

All that you had—and it was worth the keeping—
To those who bore
Your honored name. Ah! may you now be reaping
That love—and more!

THE PLUS SIGN

CHRIST SPEAKS FROM A CRUCIFIX IN BRITTANY

MY people, oh! my people, pass not by,
Or passing, turn again and look, for lo!
The shadow of my rough hewn cross and me
Hangs in the waning West, a great Plus Sign,
And bids you add us, add my cross and me,
To every joy and every pain of yours.
My arms outstretched, my weary head and feet
Nailed to the rugged cross are like the sign
The little children make to show that more,
And even more shall still be added to
The teacher's task until it all is done:—
And so, my people, look, and looking, learn—
For I would bid you add my cross and me
To make the fulness of the final sum,—
The great Plus Sign of pain and penitence,—
My cross and I are penitence and pain,
The great Plus Sign of joy and sacrifice,—

My cross and I are sacrifice and joy,
The great Plus Sign of service and of love,—

For we are service, and, above all, love.

My cross and I are love in everything,

For love is pain, and love is penitence,
And love is service, joy and sacrifice.

Then pass not by, my people, turn and look;
The great Plus Sign is fading in the West

Above a weary and a waiting world.
Before the shadow of my crucifix

Is lost in murky mist of setting sun,
Take it, and add it unto every day's

Appointed task, and let the great Plus Sign
Enrich your spirit with its priceless boon

Of pain and joy and love and sacrifice,
The sum of all that means my cross and me.

My people, oh ! my people, turn and look,
The great Plus Sign is waning in the West.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

LINES TO A FRIEND ON
PARTING AFTER SIX
WEEKS IN INDIA

DEAR fellow-traveller, pleasant Friend,
'Tis sad we near our journey's end,
And now the "parting of the ways"
Hangs like a pall upon our days—
An "Indian Summer" we have spent
With which the winter weeks have blent
Until we really hardly knew
Which season 'twas; for skies so blue
Have crowned so many charming hours
It surely was the "time of flowers."
Please don't forget your comrade when
The busy world shall claim you, then
A special loyalty 'twould be
To give a wandering thought to me,—
A train of thought just send my way
As long as up to Mandalay!

Remember Ahmedabad's procession
Where we were seized by an obsession
For Hindu weddings; wreathed in flowers
We whiled away the twilight hours—
And Udaipur! ah! fairy palace,
A "wonderland" where many an "Alice"
Might lose her way in happy dreaming,
And soon forget to *be*, in seeming!
Oh! silent cranes that fly to rest
Above the water's placid breast,
And light that flushes as it closes
And turns the sky to ash of roses,—
Full long, in memory's amber pressed,
Will dwell that scene I love the best.
Then Chitore's towers of Victory
Against a dark and murky sky,
They dominate the long-dead past,
And teach us Beauty's worth at last.
From Delhi and from Agra, too,
We learn that Art and Love are true;
We prayed before the Taj Mahal
That stands a living seneschal,
To guard a love that cannot die
For love outlives all history.
And once again our souls replied

When Sunrise on its crimson tide
Swept over Kinchinjunga's height
And bade the day destroy the night!

It seems to me when we respond
To sights like these, a subtle bond
Is forged,—and never heart from heart
Can after such a union part—
And so though oceans roll between
We're ever linked in what has been—
“Es ist so schön gewesen,” Friend,
That such a tie can never end!

THE FUTURE OF CHIVALRY

LINES READ AT A DEBATE

WHAT shall become of Chivalry?
The very word spells Arcady—
And visions o'er my fancy play
Of those brave knights of yesterday!
Launcelot and Bors and young Gawaine
Go tilting through the woods again,
The shadowy woods where "lutes were strung
And love-knots from the branches hung;"
Where lovely maiden in distress,
Soft shielded by her loveliness
Had but to call to any swain
To rescue her from any pain.
The modern Launcelot, half a knight,
Perchance might leave her to her plight.
While modern Bors is spelled with "e,"
There were no bores in Arcady!
And modern Gawaine, worst of all,—

Is only summoned when things pall,
And then, alas! for him—poor swain—
His name—dismembered—spells but *gain*!
And so, alack-a-day! Ah, me!
What shall become of Chivalry?

Fair Woman, we must turn to you—
(In any stress we always do)
The future of this gracious art,
Lies only in your subtle heart,
And would you not confess it lost,
Just pause awhile and count the cost.
Through you alone it must survive,
Man cannot keep this hope alive—
Dear Chivalry, a beggar, prays
That you should save him from disgrace,
That you should in his cause enlist,
Though Suffragette, or Suffragist.—
Forget there is a Bernard Shaw—
Or “Self-expression”—new-made law—
Forget Eugenics, put aside
The many modern fads allied,
“Sex problems” of biology,

And all the strange doxology
That rings with every ill and ism
That color Life's illusive prism.
If you would keep your old-time place
Call back the half-forgotten grace
That haloed love, and hallowed life,
And made the game seem worth the strife—
And put aside the fallacy
That one can be one's *own* "per se."
One's life can never be one's own,
Too strong the grasp, too deep the groan
Of other lives that grip the soul
And stand between us and our goal;
For life is like a giant tree
That stretches up right valiantly,
But every branch must brush another,
And every tendril bind a brother!
So, would you keep fair Chivalry,
Don't crush it by your "right to be
Just your own self"—Put "Self-expression"
Away with "Cubes" and "Post-impression."
Give heart, and soul, and love a chance,
And happiness, with song and dance

And praise and prayer and gracious things,
That lift us from the earth on wings.
Oh, Woman, give us back our right
To simple things of deep delight.
Just *be* a woman, if you can,
And Chivalry 'll come back to man!

TO DOROTHY D.

ON HER FIRST BIRTHDAY, JUNE 30, 1917

THIS is to little Dorothy D.
Granddaughter mine so sweet is she.
Long ago a poet knew
A dear little girl called Dorothy Q.;
But I am convinced she could not be
Any sweeter than Dorothy D.

Dorothy Douglas, may you grow
Into the dearest girl I know:
May you be loyal, frank and true,
Just as your mother is; may you
Loving, joyous, and honest be,
Like your father, my Dorothy D.

Welcome into the great, strange world,
Now where the dogs of war have hurled
Bitter cries that have stunned our ears,—
Into this world where no one hears
Echoes of that sweet peace we knew.
May your mother have peace through you—

Peace of the heart that love shall bring,
Love, that conquers the bitter sting
Of grief or failure or suffering.
Ah! my Dorothy, Dorothy D.,
Little bundle of joy to be,
We who are grateful thank you, dear,
For coming to bring us love and cheer.

VERSES WRITTEN FOR THE OFFICIAL BENEFIT FOR THE RELIEF
OF BELGIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN, DECEMBER 8, 1914,
STRAND THEATRE, NEW YORK, TO INTRODUCE THE DIS-
TINGUISHED ACTORS AND ACTRESSES WHO GAVE THEIR
SERVICES

READ BY
COMEDY AND TRAGEDY

MISS SYBIL CARLISLE

As Comedy

I AM the Comic Muse,
Soft as the summer rain,
Come the children I bear
Out of the breath of my brain;
Love,—and Laughter that lifts,
Joy with the lilt of a song,
Beauty that's born of praise,
And Faith that has righted wrong.
I am the heart of a child,
I am the trust of a maid,
Spirit and passion of man,
Love that is unbetrayed;
I am the Muse that smiles,
Lo! and gladness is rife,
Comedy, I am called,
I am the mirror of Life.

MR. WALTER HAMPDEN

As Tragedy

I am the Tragic Muse;
Born of the web of my brain,
Lo! my children shall pass,
Poverty, Pathos, and Pain;
Labor,—and Love forsworn,
Each in their turn I name.
Jealousy, evil born
Sorrow, and Sin and Shame.
I am the World's despair,
I am the heart's despite,
Woven of me is fear,
Shadow of mine is night;
I am the Muse that weeps,
Out of my grief is Strife,
Tragedy, I am called,
I am the mirror of Life!

MISS EDITH WYNNE MATTHISON

As "Everyman"

Could "Everyman" and every woman too,
But hear your voice as we were wont to do,
In deep rich tones invoking prayer or praise,
Then Every Man were better all his days.

MISS VIOLA ALLEN

As Hermione, in "A Winter's Tale"

Hermione, thine *was* a "Winter's Tale,"
Chill winds of foul suspicion did prevail;
Thou, ever blameless,
Overborne by blame,
Thou, never shameless,
Crucified by shame.
Hermione, we weep thy hapless fate,
So swiftly sentenced,
Justified so late!

MR. HOLBROOK BLINN

As Jack Marbury, in "Salomy Jane"

Have you heard of Jack Marbury, he from the West?
He's a terror at cards—
But his heart is the best.
Oh! the maids he caressed,
And the sins he confessed.
But he's white just the same
For he'll take all the blame,—
Have you heard of Jack Marbury, he from the West?

MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL

As Melisande, in "Pelleas and Melisande"

Creator by your rare impersonation
Of Melisande, a Master's fine creation,
At your seductive charm, we cry again,
"May God have pity on the hearts of men."

MISS ETHEL BARRYMORE

As Mme. Trentoni, in "Captain Jinks"

Our Ethel Barrymore,
Queen of Queens
In Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines,
Has made us thrill as she laughs and leans,
To the Captain in the army.
For she is a Siren through and through,
And she calls to me and she calls to you,
That is the way that Sirens do,
To the Captains in Life's Army.

MR. WILLIAM H. CRANE

As "David Harum"

Dear David Harum, your quaint wisdom comes
Fresh from the land we love to call our own.
It is the bird that sings, the bee that hums,
The wind that blows across a grove o'ergrown;
In him who voices you, you live again,
We know not which is Harum,—
Which is Crane!

MISS FRANCES STARR

As Juanita, in "The Rose of the Rancho"

Rose of the Rancho,
Flower-like you are,
A rose indeed,
But—even more, a Starr!

M L L E . D O R Z I A T

As Countess Marina, in "The Hawk"

There is a land of language exquisite,
Where every word may to the gesture fit,
A tongue that's fashioned for divine finesse,
Each syllable a song or a caress,
From that fair land we have with us to-night,
Mlle. Dorziat for our delight.

M R . F R A N C I S W I L S O N

As Cadeaux, in "Erminie"

Come listen to the "Dickey Bird,"
The gayest song you ever heard,
Sung by a tramp as fresh and gay
As ever wandered by the way—
Incorrigible, fickle, fond,
The first "Belovèd Vagabond."

MISS JANE COWL

As Mary Turner, in "Within the Law"

Protest supreme against the Law's lost soul,
Your fine presentment would lay bare the whole
Of tangled lack of justice, till in awe,
We shudder at Life's wreck, "Within the Law."

MISS ANNIE RUSSELL

As Kate Hardcastle, in "She Stoops to Conquer"

"She stoops to conquer,"
But a *star* in falling,
Brings a new gleam on earth,
A heaven recalling.

MR. HENRY MILLER

As Sidney Carton, in "The Only Way"

When Sidney Carton in the twice-told tale
Would have us weeping, or perchance turn pale,
The price of such sweet pain we gladly pay
Is it not Henry Miller's "Only Way"?

MR. WILLIAM GILLETTE

As "Sherlock Holmes"

Subtle, sincere, illumining, illusive,
Convincing, captivating, and delusive,
You who can thrill until we hold our breath,
And hang suspended as 'twixt life and death—
Who are you then, but one of two?—and yet
You *must* be Sherlock Holmes—
You *are* Gillette!

MR. WILLIAM FAVERSHAM

As Iago, in "Othello"

Iago,—sinister, unhappy rôle,
The Bard with swift unswerving instrument
Portrays the pit for every human soul
That is not with a purer purpose blent.
Degraded man!
Supreme indeed the art
Of one who may interpret such a part.

MME. NAZIMOVA

As "Hedda Gabler"

Nazimova, none but your potent gift,
Could Ibsen's Hedda to perfection lift,
Half woman, and half serpent, wholly vile,
Yet *Hedda* in *your* person doth beguile.

MESSRS. WEBER AND FIELDS

Two names that seem to all of us but one,
What memories arise of happy fun!
Two names we hold together in the heart;
Twice "Welcome Home" when they are not apart,
For neither to the other glory yields,
Immortal Weber!
And immortal Fields!

MISS ROSE COGHLAN

As Lady Gay Spanker, in "London Assurance"

Did ye ken our Rose as the Lady Gay,
Have ye heard her tell how she rode away,
To the crack of the whip at the break of day,
With the horse and the hounds in the morning?
Oh! the sound of the horn on the echoing hill,
And the cry of the pack as they ran at will,
And our dear Lady Gay,—I can hear her still,
As she told of the hunt in the morning.

MISS MARIE DORO

As "Oliver Twist"

You, Marie Doro, do for us restore
Poor little Oliver who "wanted more."
Plaintive, pathetic youth foregone and missed,
Oh! sad anomaly, a child unkissed!

MR. HENRY DIXEY

As "Adonis"

When Dixey in Adonis plays,
All hearts would sing their lightest lays,
For who could frown or who would sigh,
Or feel the world had gone awry—
When, luring us to happy ways,
Our Dixey in Adonis plays!

MISS MARY SHAW

As Mrs. Alving, in Ibsen's "Ghosts"

Heredity, the spectre of the past,
Ghost of the present,
Claims its own at last;
Ghosts of the future,
Lo! the child unborn
Yields its fair birthright
To a fate forlorn.

MISS BLANCHE BATES

As "Madame Butterfly"

Creator, of a smile, a sigh—
You gave us Madame Butterfly.

MISS ELLEN TERRY

As Portia, in "Merchant of Venice"

And now the climax of it all,
We yield to a familiar thrall.
Here's Portia, here fair Rosalind,
Gay Beatrice, and Kate unkind;
Olivia whose tender folly
Immortalized a sprig of holly—
Ah! be they sad or sweet, or merry,
All, all are *you*, dear Ellen Terry!

FINIS

TO JOSEPH H. CHOATE

FEBRUARY 18, 1913

A LENTEN TOAST TO "ALL SAINTS"

LAST Friday night St. Valentine
L Was pledged in many a bowl of wine,
Our Patron Saint is now before us,
So join with me in grateful chorus,
St. Joseph, revered, and dear,
We pledge you life, and love, and cheer!

We cannot but rejoice that you
The habits of Jerome eschew;
It is not needful in the least
To wander *always* with a beast,
Especially if, like St. Joe,
One is the "sure enough" whole show!
No *lion* can compete with him,
For Lion is his synonym!

Unlike Sebastian, you are free
From darts that pierce excessively—
And, here again, the reason why
Is evident to any eye,—
Your darts are always flung before
Another's sting your wit can floor,
And so, unscathed, you bare your breast
Secure that e'en the sharpest jest
Though aimed with skill, could never carry
Against your "rapid fire" parry.—

Another Saint forever sits
Upon an iron base that fits
Above a slowly burning fire,
A horrid scheme, both dread and dire.—
St. Lawrence,—Joseph goes one better,
No fire could his spirit fetter,
For he, himself, so full of fire,
Would conquer any funeral pyre,
And, Phœnix-like, would put to shame
The fate that tried to quench his flame.
In fact, his friends have always boasted,
He is the *roaster*, not the *roasted*!

Now last—not least—we come to *her*,
Where *Worshipped* turns to Worshipper,
For while we kneel at *Joseph's* shrine,
He kneels before *St. Caroline*,
And, thus, in him we honor too
His loyal lady, liege and true,
And so, once more, lift high the bowl,
To pledge *twin* Saints, with heart and soul!

A NEW YEAR'S TOAST TO OUR G. O. M.,
JOSEPH H. CHOATE

JANUARY 5, 1917

FILL high the glass—a New Year's Toast!
To one who is our city's boast—
Of all her jewels, quite the Gem—
Here's to our charming G. O. M.!
The G. O. M. that England knew
Was grand and wise and manly too,
And strong and powerful, but he
Could never, never, never be
What our dear G. O. M. to us
Has come to mean, for good or "wuss"
(That rhyme is quite ridiculous!)—
With rapier wit and tender heart,
On every side he bears his part,—
With literature and politics
He doth a social glamour mix,
Past master of diplomacy
An adept in Philanthropy—
Who would not drink a New Year's brew,

Dear G. O. M., to such as you!—
But when *I* dwell upon your gift,
Your gift of gifts, it seems to lift
My thought from social charm and wit,
From epigram with laughter lit,
Or legal eminence, or deep
Desire to have your country reap
From high ideals and strong endeavor
A place within the sun forever.—
Nay, when *I* think of you, I feel
The dearest gift that you reveal
Is that you never cease to lend
Your finest self to be a friend—
And we who press an eager claim
To call you by that priceless name,
Would have you fully realize
Your friendship is the gift *we* prize.
Thus, as we drink our New Year's toast,—
The wish, perchance we wish the most,
Is this,—until our journey's end,
That we may claim you as our friend.—
Your friendship is *our* diadem—
Here's—New Year's joy, dear G. O. M.:—

TO SOTHERN AND MARLOWE

TESTIMONIAL DINNER, MAY, 1917

FLANKED by such comrades, I am loath to lift
A trembling voice, as one who is the rift
Within the lute; for how can I aspire
To rival all the past and future fire
Of incense burned before this gifted pair,—
Sothorn and Marlowe—two beyond compare!

August is Thomas, waiting by my side,
To prove that words and wit are fast allied—
And if he can't suffice in his short span
To stir the house to homage—Otto *Kahn*!
And Agnes Repplier, she of rapier blade,
Has cast all other speakers in the shade—
Except that one whose method no one shames,
So nobly conscious is he of his *Ames*!

Now mark 'em all, yes, Edwin Markham too,—
To think that I should follow one like you,
Poet and prophet, master of the flow

That makes a hero wield for sword, a hoe!
So, listen, Friends, with kind and lenient ear
To these few lines that I would have you hear,—
Lines only worth your favor since they dwell
On two we honor,—two we love as well!

First to the man,—though ladies should be first,—
Who but remembers how he slaked our thirst
For high Romance,—when tried, and true, and tender,

He made us all believe there was a Zenda,—
Or, who forgets him, gay and debonair,
Inimitable, laughing Letterblair—!

And Chumley—echoes from a brilliant sire
The memory of hours that could not tire.
Magnetic magic, joined to all that's human—
Of course he knew “the way to win a woman”!
And so he won her,—she who had already
Inflamed our brains and made our hearts unsteady—
Who, by the wonder of her low, deep voice
Could make an audience tremble or rejoice,
Whose Barbara Frietchie thrilled us overmuch,
(Methinks she'd sensed e'en then the *Sothern* touch),

She who with dainty grace and poignant power,
Had made us live "When Knighthood was in
Flower"!

He won her—and, as one, they climbed the height
Of Shakespeare's "Jocund Morn" or "dreadful
night"

And we, who enter now a holy place,
Would bend with reverend knee, though lifted face,
Before the fair presentments they have made.—

Here is our tribute,—May it then be laid
With loving ardor at the Altar-Throne
Of two who made great Shakespeare all their own.—
This "wise young Judge," this madcap Rosalind,
Gay shrew untamed, and yet not half unkind,—
Fair Juliet, so bewitching, her caress
Had left sweet Romeo in a sorry stress—
Or Viola, part boy, yet wholly woman,
Capricious, tender, petulant and human!
And now, in turn, behold, as in a glass
The fawning Shylock, or Malvolio pass,
Or, suddenly, with quick vibrating pain
We sense the torture of the noble Dane,

Or, yield ourselves, philosophers as well,
To “melancholy Jacques’ ” potent spell—
We crown them with their vast achievement—Rise
And honor those who read the mysteries
Of Avon’s Bard, and read them all aright.
Who would not then be Julia’s Satellite,
Or Sothern’s slave? Once more the laurel bring
To her, the Queen of Queens “If he were King!”

HENDERSON HOUSE

ON PUTTING NEW WINE INTO OLD BOTTLES, OR THE TYRANNY OF THINGS

I LONG to linger on the porch, I long to lie and
dream—

To watch a flash of singing blue, athwart the
sunlight's gleam—

To close my eyes and lift my face to meet the sum-
mer breeze

That plays amid the maple-grove a thousand har-
monies.

But just as I would yield my soul to nature's potent
spell,—

They come, and call me from my dream—to smell
a horrid smell!

A drain gone wrong,—what shall be done—? No
plumber for nine miles—

The telephone won't work at all, this modern life
defiles

The crimson of the sunset sky, the shadow of the
cloud—

I seek the porch once more, but *they* are calling
fierce and loud—

“The fire in the northwest room won’t burn, ’twill
only smoke—

Come quickly, Mrs. Robinson, the lady there will
choke!”

What can be done? The horrid caps will ruin all
the towers,

But ladies must not choke, and so we pray the
Heavenly powers

That we the mason can persuade to build the chim-
neys higher,

And in the meantime leave the guest to shiver with-
out fire—!

Again I seek a sheltered spot and hope for sweet
repose

To bathe my senses in the hush that comes at day-
light’s close—

But no!—*They* rush to find me there, the windmill
won’t go round,

The wind has died, the engine’s stopped,—in sullen
gloom profound

I listen to the dreadful tale—"one of the bathrooms
leaks—

Four thousand gallons lost last night—" I feel
resentful shrieks

Are creeping up my throat and soon will reach my
trembling lips—

I want to go to far-off isles, too far for any ships,—

Where there is nothing but the beach and just one
scrub oak-tree,

And plumbing never was, nor is, and never more
shall be,—

I want to have no modern joys, no "comforts," no,
not one—

But just to sink upon the sand and swoon into the
sun!

When "Great-Aunt Harriet" ruled the Roost, and
ruled it very well—

She never had to smell a drain—there were no drains
to smell!

She never heard the windmill stop with sinking of
the heart—

Or lost four thousand gallons of the pumping's bet-
ter part.

She caught the rain in little tubs and washed her
guests in sections !

We have the tubs, they must have caused most
graceful genuflections—

And by a small coal-stove each one was warmed
and cheered aright—

A candle's blaze is better far than Gasoline's *no*
light—

Ah ! me, Ah ! me, when nature's call would bid my
soul take flight,

When fleecy mist of amethyst is mingled with the
night

And some pale crescent moon adown her silvery
glamour flings,

Must I still bow, a slave, before the Tyranny of
Things—?

Nay, for in spite of drains and flues and windmills
gone astray

And lights that flicker and burn low in weird and
woful way—

In spite of watery waste galore, from plumbing all
awry

There is no place like Henderson beneath the *mid-*
night sky !

TO A BISHOP

WHO SAID HE KNEW NO FLOWERS
BUT THE IRIS AND THE
BRIDAL-WREATH

OUR brilliant Bishop says he never knows
Aught but the Iris and the Bridal-Wreath,
And yet his words do blossom like the breath
Of a most fragrant and redundant rose,
Whose scent shall linger with us,—for it blows
Its scattered petals while it perisheth,
Lavishing sweeter perfume in its death,
As a fair day is fairest at its close—!
May we not broaden, though, his floral scope
With Monk's-Hood and with pious Mitrewort
Whose fragile beauty foams in distant dells,
While Jacks-in-Pulpits, on the forest slope,
In surreptitious fashion, coyly flirt,
With careless clouds of Canterbury-*Belles*!

THE POETRY SOCIETY ANTHOLOGY

VERSES WRITTEN FOR AN ANNUAL DINNER OF THE POETRY SOCIETY
OF AMERICA—WITH APOLOGIES TO EDGAR LEE MASTERS, AUTHOR
OF "SPOON RIVER ANTHOLOGY"

EDWARD J. WHEELER

PRESIDENT OF THE POETRY SOCIETY OF AMERICA

I WAS *President*—not of the United States,—
No, of something much more unique,
Much more subtle—I was the President of the
Poetry Society!

Long ago, one of America's greatest statesmen
Said he would rather be *right* than President—
I would much rather be President than *Wright*!
Anyway, Wright could never have been President—
He did not have the power of public opinion—or
was it Current Opinion—behind him—
And then, too, they elected *me* President because
of my judicial manner and my reserve of
speech—

Wright's speech is torrential,—
He is about as reserved and as silent as Niagara—
He could never have controlled himself as I did,
When the authors of unpublished poems were being
slaughtered—

My calm was never ruffled—My smile never altered,

No *one* of those authors ever knew how I felt about
their poems—
And now they never will know,
For I am dead—
And though I would not rather be Wright than
President—
Sometimes I think I *might*
Rather be *dead* than President of the Poetry Society !

MERLE ST. CROIX WRIGHT

I WAS always Wright, and even though
I am dead, I am, still Wright—
It was a habit of mine to be Wright,—
Pre-eminently right—
And even after death one does not get over a life-
long habit—
I never gave anybody time
To prove me in the wrong—
Suave, sonorous, adequate,
My words drowned patient protests
And swept them away
As the scum is swept from a river—
I was the Knower—
Do not mistake me—
Not Noah, spelt with an “N,”
Although my words *were* like a flood,
But Knower, spelt with a capital K—
One who has *knowledge*
Of all things and who expresses it in all ways
At all times—

Wheeler, who lies near me in this vault—
Had no such bottomless well of water springing—
And yet, the Poetry Society made him President—
Why?

JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE

SECRETARY

I OUGHT not to have died and come here—
I was young and strong until they made me
Secretary—

Secretary of the Poetry Society.—

It was not the work that killed me—

No, it was trying to be fair—

Fair about those unpublished poems.

When Miles Dawson and Arthur Guiterman and
Corinne Roosevelt Robinson and Dr. Smith
Would get up and talk about “convincing” and
“not convincing”

And say the poems “left them cold” and “really
were not poems at all,”

I could see spasms of rage

Chase over the faces of the authors,

Poor authors, unwitting attendants

At their own “marche funèbre.”

And then, within me, would overflow

The soft and soothing milk of human kindness

And all my veins would fill with a gentle anæmia
Of desire to be fair to all present,
And I, too, would rise, and say
That "I had not thought much of the poem they
were discussing—
Till I came to the last line, and then I did think
There was punch in the last line, *real punch*"—
Well, later, I became more anæmic and died and
came here.
I have never been quite sure if I died of anæmia or
punch—
I mean the punch we all used to drink at the Poetry
Society—
But that was not *real punch*!

MILES MENANDER DAWSON

TREASURER

I OFTEN wonder what the Poetry Society does,
now that I am dead—

Perhaps there *is* no Poetry Society—

Or, if there is one, it can only be a little one that
survives—

How its members must muse on my name, and all
that it meant to them!

It is a beautiful name, and very suggestive—

Miles! Miles!—and Menander!

Those words seem to inspire a vision of leafy laby-
rinths

And one who walked in them slowly with other
sages—

Confucius—Socrates and many more,—talking and
answering each other—

And then the end of my name, *Dawson*,

Perhaps it was the end of my name that made me
Yukonic, like a river, ceaselessly flowing.

A chill, like the end of my name—

Reminiscent of cold countries—

Would creep over the Poetry Society
When I addressed them,
A curious numb look would spread over their faces,
As if they were snowed under—
Perhaps it was my name that did it—
The snow is heavy in the Klondike—
Dawson City is there,—but Miles M. Dawson, him-
self, lies under other snowflakes.

PADRAIC COLUM

MINE are the ashes of a valiant heart,
It was I

Who once disarmed the Mighty Imagiste, Amy,
She, who, with fluent tongue, did hypnotize
The wordiest members of the Poetry Society,
And rendered them mute, impotent and dumb—
She wiped the floor up with them—

One by one—

And then I rose, and with beguiling brogue,
And that sweet voice that sings with Celtic charm,
I laid her low—

I could never have done it if my name had been
Patrick—

But—it was Padraic!

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

I DO not like being dead at all,
I was so fond of Manhattan—
Nobody ever knew of which I was *most fond*—*Man-*
hattan or a Manhattan—
Not even the Poetry Society knew,
Though they thought themselves so subtle!—
Another thing they never knew was
Whether I cared most for the *Town* or just for
Towne—
It would have been easier to find *that* out, for some-
times
I nearly gave it away—for it was so plain to me
that
Towne—Charles Hanson Towne—*was the Town*,
And the Town of Manhattan is the Earth—
But the Poetry Society never were quite sure
What I *did* think—
I always kept them guessing—
It is easy to keep poets guessing!

ARTHUR GUITERMAN

I USED to wonder sometimes if they thought me
as clever as I really was,
When I criticised all the others
In those far-away nights when we met at the Na-
tional Arts Club.
I think Corinne Roosevelt Robinson knew I was
clever
Because I never liked *any* of *her* unpublished
poems—
I tried to be lucid about it, but sometimes when I
was speaking,
I saw by the smile on the faces of some of the other
writers
That they thought I had come to a line of theirs
that I really admired.
Lucidity is a lost art,
And Poets are very provincial, unless they can
combine humor and pathos as I can—
It is hard to be funny after one is dead, however.
It is lonely being funny after one is dead—

I think I would rather be at the Poetry Society
than dead,—

At least *there*, the joke is on the other fellow!—

FINIS

AN AMERICAN'S APOLOGY

TO A SLANDERED GENTLEWOMAN FOR
INTRODUCING A CERTAIN GEN-
TLEMAN AS HER GRANDSON

(To Austen Leigh, a grandnephew of Jane Austen)

I REALLY feel a poignant pain,
To think I slandered your Aunt Jane,
Whose morals high and reputation,
Have been the "Pride" of all your Nation—
I'm sure she had a "Prejudice"
Against a bearded Suitor's kiss,
And shrank with "Sensibility"
From every sort and kind of *he*,—
And yet, my brutal speech inferred
A man's advances had been heard,
By your refined, austere Aunt Jane,
Whose heroines would hardly deign
To see your Sex without the "Vapours"—
(They never read the Sunday papers),
They were so sensitive and tender,
So modestly aware of *gender*.

When I reflect on what they were,
I feel the more how due to *her*
Is this apology sincere,
By one who holds her memory dear,
Who never would accuse of levity,
A spinster (not known by her brevity),
But still the soul of wit and grace,
Whose name is loved in every place!
Accept, then, Mr. Austen Leigh,
My most contrite apology,
And should we ever meet again,
I will not slander your Aunt Jane.

(Answer of the grandnephew)

DEAR MRS. R:—

YOUR witty letter,
Has made me more than e'er your debtor,
For what 'mere man' his heart could harden
When a fair lady asks his pardon?
In fact I bless the insinuation,
That brings such charming reparation.
It surely was an easy slip,
To miss the exact relationship,

But as you recollected quickly, Madam,
Jane was an Eve who never met her Adam.
She used to say that should she wed,
She fancied Crabbe, from all she read.
But he already had *one* spouse
(That's all the British law allows)
Which placed the authoress of "Emma"
In quite a terrible dilemma.
However, she subdued her passion,
Not being of George Eliot's fashion,
And thus Aunt Jane, a spinster, ended
Her days in isolation splendid.

So, too, as rhymin' is exhaustin',
E'en for great-nephews of Jane Austen,
I'll end, asking your tender mercies,
For my poor, wretched, halting verses.
Could I have been to school at Groten,
They had not been so awfully rotten!

A PLEA FOR THE "ULTIMATE CONSUMER" IN LITERATURE

WHEN Miss Burney's "Evelina"
In her "delicate distress"
Leaned upon her stalwart lover
Till her "fragile loveliness"
Filled him with immoderate ardor—
This despite his calm endeavor—
And he murmured "Lovely Burden,
Why, ah! why not thus forever?"
Then the "Ultimate Consumer"
Knew the climax was at hand,
And it did not take unusual
Subtlety to understand!

In the "Children of the Abbey,"—
Have you ever read that book?—
There the heroine had "vapors"
If she ever undertook
Anything at all emotional,
But the hero would forgive

While he kissed her tear and called it
“Just a pearly fugitive”—
And the “Ultimate Consumer”
Almost felt himself unmanned
By the purity and pathos
Which he, too, could understand!

In *our* day of modern Isms
’Tis a very different thing,
For the “Ultimate Consumer”
Finds a circus—a three-ring—
If he wishes to be cultured,
And he strives so very hard,
He must try a dip in Ethics,
He must battle with a bard
Quite unlike the soothing singer
Which the Eighties did demand
And the “Ultimate Consumer”
Really *cannot* understand.

He must take a dab at Science
Some time in his busy day—
He must feed on bits of faience
In a most artistic way,—

All the question of the sexes,
Intricate though it may be,
He must solve, although it vexes
Much his innate modesty;
Books on china, be it crockery
Or the ancient Manchu-land,—
How to make a garden rockery
He must fully understand!

He must bow to polyphonic,
Unpoetic, parlous prose
(And for this he needs a tonic
Stronger than his nature knows)—
He must struggle till he catches
Faintly at the hazy gist
Of the cults,—in sudden snatches,
Futurist or Feminist,—
He must tackle every “newness,”
And, believe me, it takes sand,
Till he sometimes feels discouraged,
For he *does* not understand!

He must soar with Henri Bergson,
He must sneer with Bernard Shaw,
He must ask the Swedish Ellen
For the *key* to Free-Love lore,
He must thrill to the dramatic
“Damaged” quality of “Goods”
Which were better in an attic
Kept with other poisoned foods;
He must let his lower feelings
To a flame be fiercely fanned
Just to keep himself “eugenic,”
But how *can* he understand?

Ah! dear Authors, let me ask you,
I, the “Ultimate Consumer,”
I, whose rapid dissolution
Borders on a “Russian Duma,”

Could you not,—I only ask you,—
Be at times more clarifying,
Like a Shakespeare, or a Sappho,
Wingèd word with thought undying—?
Socrates and all the Sages,
Prophets from a far-off land,
Thunder down the deathless ages
Thoughts we *still* can understand!

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